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AN EARLY CHRISTIAN TOMB FROM GERMANIA (SAPAREVA BANYA, BULGARIA)

Abstract: The architecture of excavated in the southwestern necropolis of Germania tomb-mausoleum appears in the Bulgarian lands for the first time. It has ridge-roof inside, with a hidden vaulting and leveled upper surface, which served as the floor of the memorial room above it. The formed in this way tomb-mausoleum to should be related to some sepulchral outfits from the necropolis of Yagodin Mahala in Naissos and the necropolis on Mica Antić str. in Sremska Mitrovitsa (Sirmium). The numerous tomb gifts and the weaponry show that the deceased was previously part of the imperial retinue, and has been sent to Germania after 359. The excavations proved that the military camp continued its existence also after the middle of 4th century, and has not been abandoned in the middle of 3rd century or during the period of Diocletian.

Key words: tomb-mausoleum, tomb gifts, military camp, Constantius II.

The military camp Germania (today the town of Sapareva Banya) has been created at the end of 2nd century AD by the Second cohort of the *Lucensi*¹. The fortress of the military camp of *Cohors II Lucensium*² is built at a strategic place, among well-developed road net; at the skirts of the northern slopes of Rila mountain. It assured the control and sureness on the roads³ to the interior

¹ M. Roxan, *The auxilia of the Roman army raised in the Iberian Peninsula*. London, 472 – 475; V. Velkov, *Cohors II Lucensium in Moesia und Thrase*.- AAASH, Budapest, 1989, 247-256; Г. Радославова, Г. Дзанев, *Абритус, Римски и ранновизантийски селища в България*, II, София 2003, 110 – 148; Л. Стайкова-Александрова, *Германия, Римски и ранновизантийски селища в България*, II, София 2003, 204.; Р. Иванов, *Легиони, помощни части и флота*, Археология на българските земи I, София 2004, 115 – 117.

² The name descends from the tribe *Lucensi*, supplying it with the first recruits at its foundation. See. В. Герасимова, *Дислокация на римските помощни войски в провинция Мизия от 44 до 86 г. на н.е.*, Археология 12, 4, 22–30. The *Lucensi* inhabited the Roman province *Gallaecia (Hispania Gallaecia)*, a region consisting of two convents: *Conventus Lucensis* and *Conventus Bracarenis*.

³ Two Roman roads were passing immediately to the fortress, north and south of it, connecting Germania and the sites around it with both main provincial roads: *Via Diagonalis* and *Via Egnatia*. See: S. Petrova, *The Ancient and medieval settlement at the village of Cherven*



Fig. 1. The investigated route and the location of the tomb - at point 'B'

Сл. 1. Испитана рута и положај гробнице – тачка Б

of Thrace in the mountain Hemus, confirmed by two inscriptions: the one from the village of Galabnik⁴ and the second from the village of Topolnitsa⁵. The cohort was billeting at the Balkans first in the province of Moesia in Montana⁶ and Abritus. In 136 the cohort has moved to Kabile in the province of Thrace and has remained there until the end of the 2nd century when it was dislocated in Germania. The name of the settlement Germania is not to be met up to 6th century in the written sources, and afterwards is witnessed as Γερμανία, Γερμαν and Γερμεννε.

The year of billeting of the cohort in the Upper Dupnitsa field in Germania varies from 196/7 up to 199. The date of foundation of the military camp may be pointed at the end of 197- the beginning of 198⁷ on the base of a statue erected by the prefect of the cohorta *Lucius Polius Grat*⁸, with devotional Latin in-

brege, municipality of Dupnitsa in Bulgaria, Niš and Byzantium XVII, Niš 2019, 169-173.

⁴ CIL III.12339.

⁵ Б. Геров, *Проучвания върху западнопонтийските земи през римско време*, Годишник на Софийския университет, Филологически факултет, LIV, София 1961, 243, 367, № 201а; Т. Иванов, *Към въпроса за лагеруването на cohors II Lucensium в град Германия*, Археология, 1964, (1), 22; Л. Стайкова-Александрова, *Op.cit.*, 203-204.

⁶ Its name is mentioned in a military diploma from the period of Emperor Vespasian (69 – 79 г.), issued on 2nd of February 78, found near Montana. See: Ив. Велков, *Две новооткрити римски военни дипломи от Веспасиана*. – *Известия на българския археологически институт*, II, 1923 – 1924, 83 – 88; V. Velkov, *Cohors II Lucensium Equitata in Moesia and Thrace*, Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungarica 41, 1989, 247 – 256.

⁷ The date of the ascending of Septimius Severus is 9th of April 193. See: A. R. Birley, *Septimius Severus – The African Emperor*, London and New York 1999, 89-109. It was established the tradition the power to render an account from 10th of December to 9th of December in the next year.

⁸ CIL III. 7418. His rule is determined generally in the period 198–201. See: A. Stein, *Römische Reichsbeamte der Provinz Thracia*. Sarajevo, 1920, 45-47; Д. Ботева, *Долина Мизия и Тракия в римската имперска система (193–217/218 г. сл. Хр.)*. София 1997, 156-158.

Fig. 2. The ruined northwest corner of the tomb (photo by S. Petrova)

Сл. 2. Оштећени северозападни део гробнице (фото С. Петрова)



scription in honor of emperor Septimius Severus and his fourth tribunal power. T. Ivanov determines the date of devotion respectively the foundation of the camp towards 1999. The inscription from Galabnik, in spite of the *damnatio memoriae* shows, that the cohort during the reign of Severus Alexander has the epithet which according to E. Kalinka¹⁰ was *Severiana*, while according to A. Stein – *Alexandriana*, the latter thesis supported too by T. Ivanov¹¹. Because of the lack of data on the billeting of the cohort after the period of Severus Alexander it has been supposed that the camp has stopped its existence after the Goths invasion of 250-275; or after the military-administrative reforms made by Diocletian, and that the settlement grew into a castle and Early Byzantine city, the birthplace of Belisarius, the famous general of Justinian I. The recent research reveals a new picture of dwelling and existence of Germania.

It was established during the recent two years of archaeological excavations that the space between the Western Gate and 100 m west of it has not been dwelt because of the necessity of defense of the fortress walls. Studies so far, albeit on individual small plots, have outlined the habitation¹². A *villa urbana* has been partly discovered¹³, and also parts of other villas of the same type, unfortunately with no possibility to be studied¹⁴. The Western – Southwestern necropolis of the camp and the Late Antique castle were localized, together

⁹ Т. Иванов, *Op.cit.*, 1964, 22.

¹⁰ E. Kalinka, *Antike Denkmäler in Bulgarien*, Wien 1906, 48, № 44

¹¹ A. Stein, *Op.cit.*, 1920, 54-55; Т. Иванов, *Op.cit.*, 1964, 21.

¹² С. Петрова, Е. Севдин, *Спасителни археологически разкопки на късноантичен некропол в Сапарева баня, обл. Кюстендил*, Археологически открития и разкопки през 2020 г., София 2021, 923-928; The same, Спасително археологическо проучване в Сапарева баня, обл. Кюстендил (УПИ VI 2757/2781, кв. 110). - *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2020 г.*, София 2021, 928-931; The same, Спасително археологическо проучване в Сапарева баня, обл. Кюстендил (УПИ VIII 2783/2781, кв. 110). – *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2020 г.*, София 2021, 931-933.

¹³ Р. Спасов, В. Вандова, В. Мартинова, Н. Спасов, Н. Атанасова-Тимева, Б. Гълъбова, Археологическо наблюдение и спасителни археологически разкопки на ул. „Германея“ № 26 в гр. Сапарева баня. – *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2015 г.*, София 2016, 519-521.

¹⁴ С. Петрова, Е. Севдин, *Спасително археологическо проучване в Сапарева баня – водопроводно отклонение*, Археологически открития и разкопки през 2020 г., София 2021, 794-796м С. Петрова, Е. Севдин, *Op. cit.*, 2021, 923-925.

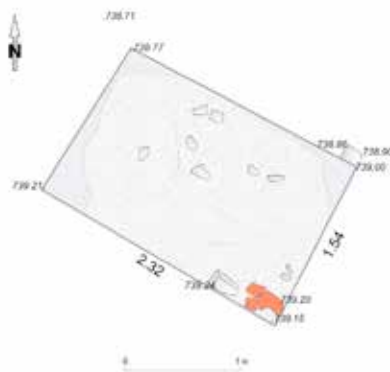


Fig. 3. The tomb at its opening. Remains of the brick floor of the mausoleum in the southeast corner of the tomb (photo by S. Petrova, geodesy engineer A. Kamenarov)

Сл. 3. Отвор гробнице. Остаци патоса од опеке и југоисточни део гробнице (фото С. Петрова, геодетски инжењер А. Каменаров)

with two significantly ruined basilicas and a vaulted half-cylindrical tomb¹⁵. In it two burials were found, one of them belonging to the Early Christian period. Remains of a blacksmith's hearth serving the necropolis were discovered in the eastern part of the necropolis¹⁶.

Digging for the channel for mineral water confirmed our assumptions that the residential area of Germania is located southeast of the military camp fortress (fig. 1). The last around 200 m. of the layout of the water-conduit to the southwest direction (from point D to point A) passed through the necropolis in which 65 burials were found from Late Antiquity, from end of 3rd to the first half of 5th century according to the found coins. All burials have been made by inhumation according to the Early Christian ritual. It was established the existence of family burial places with several burials at one and the same place, either on the same level, or made in consequence, almost the late one over the preceding burial¹⁷.

A late antique tomb has been excavated at a T-like crossing at the point B in its northwestern part¹⁸. Only its northwest corner has been destroyed by a modern water-main, but the rest of the tomb remained intact (fig. 2). It was established that this was a tomb-mausoleum, as the flat surface above the tomb is covered with Roman bricks as the floor of the mausoleum built above it, unprotected and destroyed by the modern street (fig. 3).

The plan of the tomb is rectangular, with the long sides in direction west-east. It's built of bricks and stones, welded with mortar mixed with crushed brick. The tomb-mausoleum is dug in the earth in a pit excavated beforehand. It has been established during the research that the entrance differently from the found in 2014 near situated tomb¹⁹ with entrance from the

¹⁵ В. Хаджиангелов, М. Христов, *Спасително археологическо проучване в гр. Сапарева баня, парцел УПИ Х-2641*, Археологически открития и разкопки през 2014 г., София 489-492.; Петрова, Севдин 2020

¹⁶ С. Петрова, Е. Севдин, *Op.cit.*, 2021, 928-931; The same, *Op.cit.*, 2021, 931-933.

¹⁷ С. Петрова, Е. Севдин, *Спасителни археологически разкопки на късноантичен некропол в Сапарева баня, обл. Кюстендил*, Археологически открития и разкопки през 2020 г., София 2021, 923-928.

¹⁸ The team of the excavations, at the head of which was Dr. Svetla Petrova. The tomb was discovered in the northwestern part of the T-crossing of the Jordan pop Michailov str. and Zlaten vek str. in 2020, from 0,15 m depth from the contemporary level of the terrain, immediately under the asphalt covering.

¹⁹ The tomb was found during the research of the terrain for building the hotel

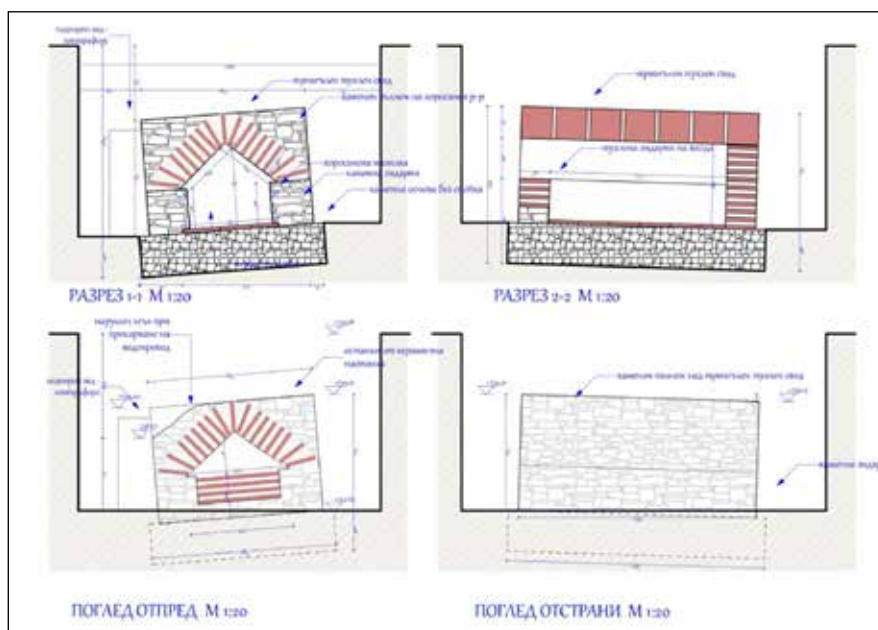


Fig. 4. Section and view - front and sides of the tomb (author arch. V. Petkova)

Сл. 4. Пресек и изглед фронталног дела и бочних делова гробнице (аутор арх. В. Петкова)

east, here is from the west, very rudely filled with three big stones and built with smaller stones and mortar²⁰. We can find an analogy in Sirmium and Naissos²¹, related to the period of Constantius II.

Description: technique and technology of building. The plan of this tomb is rectangular, with the longer wall in direction west-east, outer dimensions 235/163 cm and high 115 cm, 40cm high from which belong to the substruction. The dimensions of the tomb chamber are 75/82/81cm, with a triangle ceiling with dimensions 102x/30cm (height). The stone-brick walls are thick 40 cm. The

Relaxa. See: В. Хаджиангелов, М. Христов, Спасително археологическо проучване в гр. Сапарева баня, парцел УПИ X-2641. – *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2014 г.*, София, 489-492.

²⁰ It was established during the excavations that there has been made an attempt from the inner side, together with the building of the opening, to surfaces to be plastered and decorated similarly to the other inner walls.

²¹ I. Popović. Survey of Early Christianity in Sirmium/Sremska Mitrovica (fourth to fifth c. AD). – *Grenz Übergänge. Forschungen zu Spätantike und Mittelalter 4, Akten des 27. Internationalen Symposiums der Grundprobleme der frühgeschichtlichen Entwicklung im mittleren Donaauraum, Ruma, 4.–7.11.2015* (herausgegeben von Orsolya Heinrich-Tamáska, Niklot Krohn und Sebastian Ristow), 2016, Verlag Bernhard Albert Greiner, Remshalden, 179-193, figs. 12 and 14; G. Jeremić, 'Burials in Naissus in Late Antiquity – case study of the necropolis in Jagodin Mala'. – *Constantine the Great and the Edict of Milan 313. The Birth of Christianity in the Roman Provinces on the Soil of Serbia* (eds. I. Popović and B. Borić-Brešković), National Museum in Belgrade, Belgrade 2013, 128-130, fig. 57.

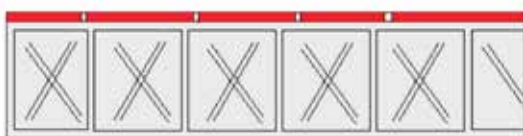


Fig. 5. Decoration on the north wall of the tomb (photo by E. Sevdin)

Сл. 5. Декорација северног зида гробнице (фото Е. Севдин)



Fig. 6. The entrance is from the west (photo by E. Sevdin)

Сл. 6. Улаз са западне стране (фото Е. Севдин)

ridge roof is made of well-done bricks with dimensions 30/30/4 cm (fig. 4). Inside the walls of the tomb are plastered and decorated with incised decoration (fig. 5). The surface of the roof is evened with ridge inclination to the long sides. From the west the tomb is closed by an opening big as 83.5/43 cm. The floor is paved with bricks of the same size as on the vault, placed over a pebble-mortar layer. The walls are lying on strip-like-bases with enlargement of 10 cm to all directions and with width of the bases around 60 cm. The bases were strengthened by a blockade of small stones big circa 10-12 cm, poured into the earthwork for the strip-like-bases, and plastered with mortar. The first row of stone masonry of the tomb is put over this blockade, on the same level as the floor. The mortar is a filler of crushed pottery materials with preserved high quality as strength and lack of weathering. It is dug into the ground, in a horizontal excavation, with -13° slope to the north. The construction of the tomb structure took place in a previously dug pit. Obviously, the tomb outfit was under the earth and with no more access. Prepared in this way, the tomb installation began to succumb to the north direction, and this caused the erecting of a support-contra-force of unusual form at the northeaster outer corner (fig. 3 - right). Obvious from three

sides, except from the west one, is the outer pouring with mortar over the vertical walls of the tomb.

The wide gaps of the lunette of the outer western wall reveal a vaulting from outside, hidden after erecting of a flat platform over the vaulting. The

gaps on the outer vaulting are filled up from the west side with mortar mixed with crushed to small parts brick. The entrance is forming a triangle form, whose base is 83.5 cm and height of 43 cm (**fig. 6**). The corp of the deceased has been carried in namely from here. A doorstep is formed inside wide 35 cm, forming the bed for his head. The ceiling from the outside is made as a ridge roof, retreating on 7 cm alongside the long walls, whose height is 40 cm. A half-cylindrical vault is



Fig. 7. Decoration on the east lunette (photo by E. Sevdin)

Сл. 7. Декорација источне лунете (фото Е. Севдин)

built over the formed in this way ridge roof, after which the corners of the vault were filled up to leveling with the upper outer surface of the tomb. A pavement of square Roman bricks has been placed over the flat upper outer surface of the tomb, by that forming the floor of the erected over the tomb memorial building. In this way, the tomb (the burial) has become a mausoleum.

The decoration of the walls from the inside is done over the still wet plaster by the tip of the fingers or by a subject with rounded top (**fig. 5**). The lower parts of the walls up to the ridge vaulting are decorated with incised lines. They represent plates imitating the plates-parapets with decoration of two straight lines crossing each other in diagonal. In the triangle space (lunette) of the eastern side is formed a square decorated from the inside with crossing each other diagonals, with the rude representation of a Chi-Ro (**fig. 7**).

The tomb has been prepared in a hurry. It can be grasped from the way of building, by the pouring of the whole tomb from outside by mortar with the aim of draining, but also for strengthening the masonry; also from the terrain displacement of the tomb when spading the pit and erecting the tomb outfit. It is possible that because of the quick building of it and still the not dry mortar, the wall of the northeastern corner began to incline to the north, which caused its supporting by the additional elongation of the eastern wall in north direction, forming a contra-force.

Results of the physical-chemical research of the plaster/the mortar: The experimental study²² includes a complex of methods for the determination of the phase content of the plaster. It is determined as lime plaster with mineral additions of fine parts of bricks, made of iron-containing clay and of volcano rock materials, probably volcano ashes and/or zeolitic volcanics. The quantity

²² The analyses are done in the laboratory of the Scientific-research sector of the University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy in Sofia, Bulgaria.

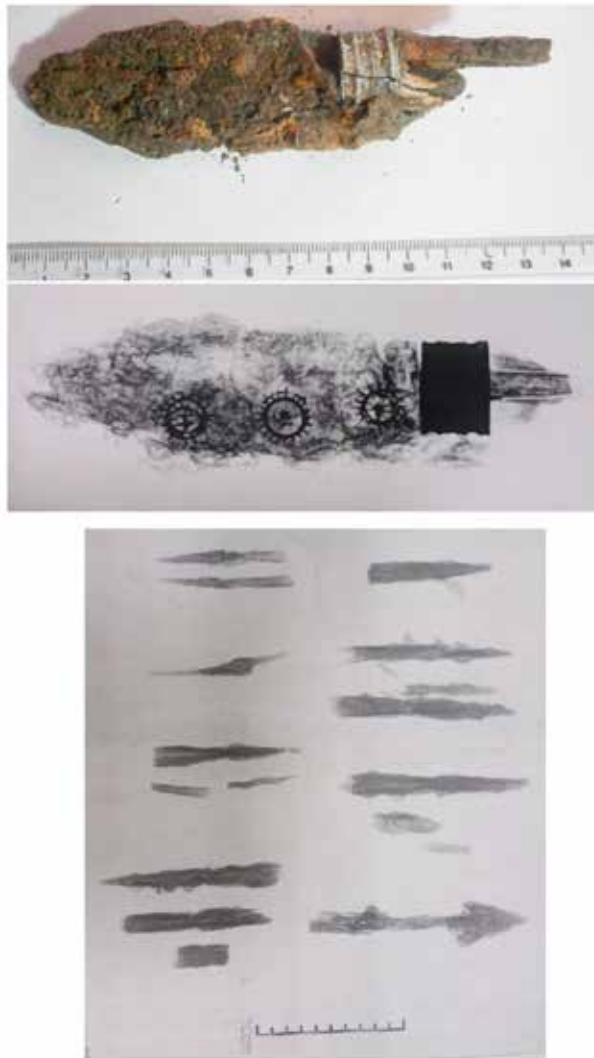


Fig. 8. Weapons – funeral gifts. Above - the sheath and the knife – photo and radiography. Below - radiography of part of the weapon (photo by E. Koleva)

Сл. 8. Оружје – гроб-ни прилози. Изнад – корице и нож – фото и радиграфија. Испод – радиграфија дела оружја (фото Е. Колева)

of fitting together mass is 25-30 wt%, and the filler represents 70-75 wt% of the material. The phase composition/structure of the sample reveals interest with its specifics determined by the identified crystal phases of edenite – type of amphibolite, aragonite, calcium-aluminum hydrate and laumontite, type of zeolite. The amphibolite is introduced in the binding lime solution and has not passed through changes. The peculiarity of the chemical composition of the material is the high content of iron and magnesium oxide. The plaster / the mortar has not lost its mechanical strength in spite of its not high density, with its pores as big as only few mm.

The tomb ritual and tomb gifts. Only one burial has been done in the tomb by inhumation. The body is with his head to the west on a raised bed serving

also as a doorstep of the tomb chamber. The arms are stretched out alongside the corp. Numerous tomb gifts serving in live-time of the deceased have been placed in the tomb chamber²³. The found tomb gifts and the weaponry of more than 10 in number reveal that this is a burial of a military officer (**fig. 8**). The knife²⁴ has a wooden hilt decorated in its upper part with a silver gilded plate with a sculptural decoration on it (**fig. 8- above**). Because of the extremely bad quality of the iron of the blade of the knife its conservation was not possible. The photo of the X-ray machine clearly shows that there is a decoration of 3 „eyes“ on the blade, with additional short incised incisions on the outer circle of each eye, similar to a schematic image of the sun. With the exception of the decoration of the Thracian *μάχαρα* and the Roman *sica* ²⁵, in Bulgaria still there is no data on the decoration over the blade of parade and other military knives from later centuries as is the case with the knife from Germania²⁶.

The rest of the weaponry as tomb gifts is also not typical for the region. Among them there are two knives with traditional form. The form of the rest of weaponry is more frequently met in the central and western Roman provinces²⁷, than in the Balkans. The prevailing among the gads of spears is the type Hasta (Spear) (**fig. 8- down**). It can be met also Pilum (Javelin). It is established that Hasta have been preferred in the cavalry, and namely the cohort billeting in Germania, is known as equestrian (*equitata*). One of the spears is of interest among the others with its conus-like piercing ending and two vis-a-vis built in conuses as piercing elements. It is the first type of such a spear in the Gorno Dupnitsa field²⁸. The piece from the tomb has undergone a repair in which one of the cutting up elements is replaced by a new one made of local iron. All the weaponry is made of iron of a very bad quality, which during the advancing of time corroded to the state of dust. At the same time, the iron extracted and worked in the region is of very good quality and difficult to corrosion, hav-

²³ The conservation of the metal objects was made by Emilia Koleva, and of the ceramics, glass and bone by Antonia Angelova

²⁴ With dimensions: preserved length 14 cm. Knife with spilt, iron, wood, silver gilded. The object in in fragmented state: the silver element broken into two, the remnants of the handle too, as well as part of the scabbard. Deforming corrosion products and other surface layers are observed. There is intercrystalline corrosion in silver, which led to its breakage. The textile fragment is preserved in pseudomorphic form.

²⁵ These two kind of knives are studied in details in the book of Н. Торбов, *Ножът – μάχαρα или sica, оръжие от II в. пр. Хр. – началото на II в.*, София 2018.

²⁶ My gratitude to the colleague V. Ivanishevich from the Archaeological Institute at Belgrad who shared with me that in Serbia has been found a knife with decoration, unfortunately not published.

²⁷ See: E. Kavanagh de Prado, F. Quesada Sanz, *Pugio Hispanensis* between Celtiberia and Rome. Current research and Analysis of the construction of the Sheats. – *Limes XX. Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies. Leon 2006*, Madrid 2009, 339-350; D. J. Marchant, *Roman weaponry in the province of Britain from the second century to the fifth century AD.*, Durham theses, Durham University. (1991) Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/1557/>

²⁸ For the first time such iron point was discovered during the archaeological excavations of the Early Christian basilica at the village of Cherven breg in 2018. It also was languishing in the hands because of its very low quality.



Fig. 9. Part of the funeral gifts: 1. Buckle, silver gilding (photo by S. Petrova); 2. Application to belt set (photo by E. Koleva); 3. Rings for hanging – part of the belt trim (photo by E. Koleva); 4. Medallion, silver gilding (photo by E. Koleva)

Сл. 9. Део гробних прилога: 1) Копча, посребрена (фото С. Петрова) 2) део појаса (фото Е. Колева) 3) прстење – део појаса (фото Е. Колева) 4) посребрени медаљон (фото Е. Колева)

ing in mind the presence of titanium in it. This proves that the deceased officer has come with his weapons to Germania, much different in its form and decoration from the weaponry of the same period in Thrace. The weapon is placed at the feet of the deceased at the south side of the tomb, in such way that the an unusual spear with the two elements vis-à-vis is placed in a red slip pottery cup.

He was in parade dress from which preserved are only some remnants of the textile of the red *pallium*, imprinted and with left pigments on the hilt of the knife and on some other objects of the tomb gifts. The deceased is with a military belt, with silver applications and silver gilded buckle. (fig. 9-1). Its border is D-like, slightly concave alongside its length and decorated with a relief ornament at both ends with the plate. The tongue is kept by bending around the frame. The frame is connected by an elliptical plate, fastened to the frame by bending and fastened to a belt with three rivets, successively placed in a straight row. The plate is dense, the reverse repeating the outlines of the averse. The form of the buckle, the frame and the plate relate it to type VII.a,

dated in 275 – 400r.²⁹ The belt applications are made of silver. One application of square form and open-work decoration as well as two silver rings, stitched to the belt by plates in the form of a high trapezia (fig. 9-2,3), as well as 11 free silver rings. The ‘Haron’s obol’ has been placed in this purse (fig. 10). It is a silver coin, *siliqua*, ‘first matrix’; minted in Trier (*Augusta Treverorum*, Treveri), in 342-343 or 347³⁰. The bust to the right of the emperor is shown on the averse,

²⁹ The First belt group according to M. Sommer, dated between 290 – 400 r. (M. Sommer. Die Gürtel und Gürtelbeschläge des 4. und 5. Jahrhunderts im römischen Reich. –Bonner Hefte, 22, 1984, 59, 79); type VII a, according to L. Traikova (Л. Трайкова, *Коланът южно от Долен Дунав – края на III – началото на VII в.*, София 2017, 38, 57).

³⁰ RIC VIII, 127-128. The coin weighs 2.64 grams, after restoration, which suggests that it weighed about 2.7 grams or more. Thanks to my colleague Dr. Lars Ramskold for the

with a pearl diadem with *teniae*, parade cuirass with a richly draped pallium over, clasped with round agrapha on his right shoulder. Grainy circle. Obverse legend: FL IVL CONSTAN-TIVS PF AVG. On the averse is represented the emperor standing to the left in military dress. In its right hand he holds a *labarum*. Obverse: the inscription: PAX AV-GVSTORVM. In the segment – TR³¹.

This type of coin has been minted also for the three brothers very soon after they have been announced as Augusti in 337: for Constans whose residence was in Trier, and for Constantine II and Constantius II. The siliques minted in the first emission (342-343) have the coin sign of *officina* 'P' or 'S' (RIC VIII 30-32), and the busts are of an early type. The later coins (RIC 161-163, 170) are obviously made several years later than the ones of the first emission of PAX AVGVSTORVM, as seen from their busts. This inscription 'PAX AVGVSTORVM' most probably is recording the improvement of the relationship among the brothers. According to the opinion of L. Ramskold, there should exist some reason Constans to give silver donative to his brother with this legend³².

A silver gilded medallion³³ was put on the breast of the deceased with two incised representations en face: the bust of the emperor on the averse; the bust of his spouse on the reverse (fig. 9-4). The medallion is almost with round form, decorated at the end with dotted rim, interrupted in its upper part. The medallion is fastened with two silver rivets for a leather connection. The emperor is dressed in cuirass and with *sagum*. The hairstyle is represented by short straight oblique cuts, and backwards can be observed the parts of pearl diadem. The representation of the empress shows a triangle face with a sharp small chin. The hairstyle is treated by the same straight parallel cuts similar to the ones of the emperor. Their faces are schematic, the eyes-brows connected with the representation of the nose through a mutual line. The eyes are like round points. The mouth is represented by a double small horizontal cut. The style and treatment of the imperial couple reveal a local atelier with very simple and modest abilities of the master who has prepared the medallion.

From iconographic and stylistic point of view the representation on the medallion can be related to the period 355-361³⁴. The representation of the emperor en face on the golden cons and medallions, in the sculptural marble portraits, the manner of representation of the face, the hair-dress and the diadem prompt the period of 355-359 as the possible one for creating the medallion. The emperor sojourned in Sirmium in 357-359 and namely then the medallion is ordered to be made by a local master. On the averse is Constantius II, and on

consultation.

³¹ New matrix type RIC VIII, 163. Differs in shoes, cuirass, etc.

³² Thanks to my colleague Dr. Lars Ramskold for his advice on the coin and the medallion.

³³ With dimensions: height 4 cm, width 2.5 cm.

³⁴ See: M. Prusac, *The Constantinian Bronze Colossus Nero's Hairstyle and the Beard of Commodus*, Acta ad archaeologiam et atrium historiam pertinensia 29 (2017), 120, fig. 9 – the colossal marble portrait of Constantius II from Rome, Musei Capitolini. Inv. N. 2882; similar portrait made on a golden medal of the emperor from Antioch from 355-361 (RIC VIII, 088D and 162).



Fig. 10. *Siliqua* of Constantius II, minted in Trier (photo by E. Koleva)

Сл. 10. *Siliqua* Константијуса II, откована у Тријеру (фото Е. Колева)

the reverse his spouse Flavia Aurelia Eusebia (Evsebia). Lars Ramskold supposes that the medallion has been prepared on the occasion of the triumph of Constantius II in 357 and his enter in Rome together with Eusebia. In my view, it is possible that namely the military chieftain who settled in Germania has ordered the medallion during the period 357-59 when the emperor stayed in Sirmium. The representations are quite primitive and no parallel has been found so far for the medallion. Independently of the occasion for ordering and making the medallion, it reveals the connection of its holder with the imperial family and the fact that he was in close relations with the imperial encirclement.

As tomb gifts there is also a glass with a lapped decoration import from Levant³⁵. The glass is of very pale light blue colour, Syrian import. The form is cone-shaped, with rounded bottom (**fig. 11**). The horizontal lines are lapped under the slightly turned to the outside rib and on the body to the bottom. Several are the pottery vessels: an amphora, jug, oinochoe, pitcher, glass and seven small bone dice (**fig. 12**). The amphora belongs to the table type (**fig. 12-1**). It is made of grey clay. The handles are with ellipsis section, profiled and beginning from the middle of the throat. The latter in its upper half is with a profiled decoration. The handles end at the shoulders immediately before the widest part of the body. The bottom is convex with a low ring-like stem/stalk. The jug is made of well refined clay which has achieved grey colour after the furnace, similar to the amphora (**fig. 12-2**). It possesses a pear-like body, elongated throat, with a profiled decoration in the form of rings and horizontal incised lines. The mouth is dense and inclined outsides. The decoration consisting of one horizontal line passes at the widest part of the body. The body of the jug ends with a convex, low and rolling ring-like stemmed bottom. The oinochoe is also made of grey clay, well

³⁵ The parallel for the cup was found in the necropolis of Naissos, and in the interior of Thrace, in a tomb from Kapitain Dmitriev, Peshtera region. See: С. Дрча, Г. Јеремиф, В. Црноглавац, *Јагодин мала, касноантичка некропола*. Каталог, Ниш 2012, 119, № 109; Л. Ботушарова, *Късноримска гробница при с. Капитан Димитриево*, Известия на Археологическия институт, XVII, 1950, 244-249.

refined. After the largely opened three-leaves of the mouth, follows the throat, decorated with profiled rings, similar to the ones of the amphora and the jug (fig. 12-3). The body is like a sphere. The profiled ellipse-section-like handle comes out immediately under the mouth and finishes at the beginning of the shoulders. The bottom is convex, equal to the ones of the amphora and the jug. The similarity of forms and of the decoration of the mouths of all the three vessels (the amphora, the oinochoe and the jug) reveal a workshop of production. The other two pottery vessels are made of clay with a red colour achieved after the furnace. The pitcher



Fig. 11. Glass cup with polished decoration (photo by A. Angelova)

Сл. 11. Стаклена чаша са полираном декорацијом (А. Ангелова)

is made of well refined clay with reddish-brown colour (fig. 12-4). The mouth rib is formed like a ring. A small almost ear-like profiled handle with ellipse-like section begins from the short and bulging throat and ends at the width of the shoulders³⁶. The body is narrow, almost cylindrical, with a slight enlargement toward the bottom, a small stemmed one. The amphora-form demonstrates a defect in the torsion of the body, possibly during its draining and before its firing. Due to the uneven bottom, the pitcher is inclined to one side. A piece of fallen mortar over its mouth supported on the south wall (in the southeastern corner) is one more proof that the tomb's mortar was still not dry when the burial was made in it. The cup is made of well refined and fired clay, with a red slip cover. (fig. 12-5) Its mouth rib is slightly turned to the outsides and the form is almost biconical, with a stemmed bottom and typical for the period form and colour. One of seven dice of the tomb gifts is broken.³⁷ (fig. 12-6) The numbers on the dice sides are represented as one or two circles³⁸ and point in its centre like 'eyes'. The small bone dice are rarely met tomb gifts, mainly in Lower Moesia and Thrace (in Naissus, Noviodunum, Tomis, Troesmis, Nicopolis ad Istrum, Novae, Oescus, Odessos); alongside the Danubian Limes in Dacia, Pannonia, Germania etc.³⁹ Its appearance as tomb gift is connected with people who used

³⁶ A similar amphora-shaped pitchers were found in the necropolis of Jagodina Mala, Nis; dated to the second half of the 4th century.. See: С. Дрча, Г. Јеремић, В. Црноглавац, *Op.cit.*, 141-142, Кат. №№ 153 and 154.

³⁷ After screening of the whole earth which has fallen inside the tomb all these centuries, the second half of the dice was not found. This proves that the die was put already broken among the tomb gifts.

³⁸ Only one of the dice is with one circle and a point. The other six ones possess two concentric circles with a point in the centre.

³⁹ С. Дрча, Г. Јеремић, В. Црноглавац, *Op.cit.*, 114, Кат. № 100; V. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, *Games and gamers in Dacia*, *Archeologia Moldovei*, XXXIX, 2016, 33-56q and cit. lit.



Fig. 12. Other burial gifts: 1. Amphora; 2. Jug; 3. Oinochoe; 4. Pitcher; 5. Cup; 6. Dice (photo by A. Angelova)

Сл. 12. Други гробни прилози: 1) амфора 2) бокал 3) ојнохое (вински крчаг) 4) крчаг 5) чаша 6) коцке (фото А. Ангелова)

to play with them in the Roman Empire had the necessary money and time. These elements according to the researchers point to the soldiers of the Roman *auxiliary* troops⁴⁰; to the places with significant military presence⁴¹.

All data: the coin, the tomb gifts, the weaponry, and the dice reveal that the deceased was a military man. The medallion corrects the date of burial in the years after 359, when Constantius II leaves Sirmium. Our opinion is that it happened at the end of his rule after 359 or during the rule of Julian the Apostate.

Peculiarities of the tomb. On the first place, this is the unusual forming of the tomb, for the moment the only one the territory of Bulgaria. It is ridge roof inside, hidden half-cylinder with even upper end, forming the floor of the mausoleum over. The tomb could be determined also as a masonry tomb in the way are determined similar structures in Yagodin mala in the region of Nish⁴². The fact that its strict parallels determined as tombs are found in Sirmium⁴³ and one more similar with traces of vaulting on the ridge roof also in the necropolis

⁴⁰ P. S. Wells, *The Barbarian Speak. How the conquered peoples shaped Roman Europe*, Princeton. University Press, Princeton and Oxford 1999, 225; M. Meyer, Romanization? Überlegungen zum römischen Einfluss auf die kaiserzeitliche Germania Magna, in: Rubel, A. (ed.), *Imperium und Romanisierung. Neue Forschungsansätze aus Ost und West zu Ausübung, Transformation und Akzeptanz von Herrschaft im Römischen Reich*, Hartung-Gorre Verlag, Konstanz 2013, 68.

⁴¹ V. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, *Op.cit.*, 41 and note 109.

⁴² G. Jeremić, *Op.cit.* fig. 57.

⁴³ Константин II, born on 7th of August 317 in Sirmium, the province Lower Pannonia.

of Yagodin Mala⁴⁴ put several hypothesis in front of the researcher. One of it is that the data from the tomb itself and the tomb gifts suppose that the deceased was in the entourage of emperor Constantius II. In our opinion, he sojourned with the emperor when Constantius II was in Sirmium in the period 357–359. It is quite possible that the deceased in the tomb in Germania was also born in Sirmium too (?) – the native place of the emperor too. It is possible that the officer was part of his guard, and the emperor had a complete confidence in him, for which he has got the coin/coins and the medallion. The moving of the officer to Germania we supposedly connect with 359, the year of dropping Sirmium on the way to Constantinople. The officer has been sent by the emperor to guide the military unit here. The burial and the quickly built on the sample of Sirmium tomb with mausoleum supposed that together with the officer other soldiers have also come to Germania as part of the military unit. Namely they have managed to build the tomb with the mausoleum over, following the funeral traditions of Sirmium.

The buried person is a military man of a certain rank, probably officer, buried in his military garments with silver applications. A lot of weaponry was found in the tomb, more than 10 different iron ones: the aforementioned knife with sheath decorated with silver gilded ornament; spears not typical for Thrace and also other weapons unknown in this province. The weapons were with strong corrosion and this is different from the iron weapons produced in the region of Sapareva Banya and Samokov, which never are found in such a state. This fact proves that the weapons from the tomb are not a local production which traditionally have been made of a high quality iron. The forms are also speaking of the non-local origin of the weapons. It seems that the officer probably has come from some western places to Germania, probably Pannonia and Sirmium, and was in the close milieu of Constantius II. The silver *siliqua* is witnessing of the donative of the emperor made on certain occasion – his birthday in connection with the imperial cult or with some important military and political events.

This burial proves that the camp has not been abandoned by the army in the middle of 3rd century or in Diocletian's time as considered so far: it has continued its existence, in the presence of military unit also in Late Antiquity in 4th – 5th century, even in 6th one. This unit guarded the two passages to the east and to the extremely important for the region road connections with *Via Diagonalis* and *Via Egnatia*.

⁴⁴ See: Jeremić, *Burials in Naissus in Late Antiquity – case study of the necropolis in Jagodin Mala*, Constantine the Great and the Edict of Milan 313. The Birth of Christianity in the Roman Provinces on the Soil of Serbia (eds. I. Popović and B. Borić-Brešković), National Museum in Belgrade, Belgrade 2013.

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РАНОХРИШЋАНСКА ГРОБНИЦА ИЗ ГЕРМАНИЈЕ
(САПАРЕВА БАЊА, БУГАРСКА)

Архитектура ископаване југозападне некрополе у Германији појављује се по прави пут у бугарским земљама. Поседује кров са слемом изнутра, са скривеним сводом и слојевитом горњом површином која је служила као патос за меморијалну просторију изнад. Овако формирана гробница – мазулеј повезана је са сепулкралним контекстом некрополе у Јагодин Мала у Наисосу и некрополем у улици Миће Антића у Сремској Митровици (Сирмијуму). Бројни прилози у гробници и остаци оружја, показују да је преминули припадао некој од царских војних јединица и да је послат у Германију после 359. године. Ископавања су показала да је војни логор постојао и после средине IV века и да није напуштен ни у III веку за време Диоклецијана како се раније сматрало.