HISTORICAL PICTURE OF DEVELOPMENT OF BRONZE AGE CULTURES IN VOJvodina

Abstract. As a ‘contact zone’ subject to the influences of the Pannonian Plain to the north, the Balkans to the south, the Carpatho-Danubian region to the east and the sub-Alpine region to the west, Vojvodina is exceptionally important for the study of the Bronze Age of these regions. It witnessed the processes of integration of certain cultures only to see them disintegrate again. At times almost the entire territory was dominated by a single culture, while at others completely divergent cultures developed simultaneously in each of its three constituent regions: the Banat, Srem and Bačka. In the latter half of the Early Bronze Age an attempt to establish control over an extensive territory was made by the Vatin culture which, in its westward and southward expansion, covered the central and southern Banat, and most of Srem, reaching as far as Šumadija and the Lower Morava Valley. The Vatin population was driven out by the Encrusted Pottery people descending from the central and western Pannonian Plain. They remained there through several developmental phases extending into north-western Bulgaria and part of the Romanian Banat. At the end of the Middle and in the Late Bronze Age, in Srem, the Banat and around the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers a new culture emerged, marked by large necropolises containing cremation burials. In its expansion it covered the territory previously inhabited by Encrusted Pottery peoples. At the same time, northern Vojvodina became occupied by the Hügelgräber culture penetrating down the Tisa and Danube rivers. In the final phase of the Bronze Age there appeared black burnished pottery attributable to the widespread eastern Gava complex. In western Vojvodina this complex confronted the central-European, sub-Alpine and west-Pannonian varieties of the Urnenfelder culture. This confrontation, as well as numerous hoards dated to Ha A1–A2 C, mark the end of the Bronze Age in these regions.

Key words. Vatin culture, Encrusted Pottery, black burnished pottery, chronology.

The southern areas of Pannonian plain are when the Bronze Age cultures are concerned among the best investigated regions of this part of our continent. For over 120 years these areas had been investigated, the material was collected, there are many reports, articles and of course studies and monographs. By the end of 19th and the beginning of the 20th century some of the leading sites of the Bronze Age including Vatin, Dubovac, Židovar, Duplja, Vršac–At, Vršac–Crvenka in the south Banat and Mokrin in the north Banat as well as Surčin, Gomolava near Hrtkovci, Šarengrad and Jarak in Srem, Feudvar in Bačka and some others had been already known. In the ensuing years the new sites were discovered and they all made possible first large scientific syntheses like Vojvodina I (Prehistory studied by M. Grbić, 1939) Praistorija na tlu Srbihe I, II (M. Garasić 1973), Praistorija Vojvodine (B. Brukner, B. Jovanović, N. Tasić 1974) then monographs on cultures or sites all mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this work. In the bibliography are also cited many symposia, colloquia and other meetings of the scholars devoted entirely or just partially to the problems of the Bronze Age. Finally, the basis for establishing the new synthesis on prehistoric cultures in Vojvodina is provided by multilayered sites investigated by modern methods of archaeological investigation. These are in the professional literature well known sites Gomolava near Hrtkovci, Gradina on the Bosut river near Šid, Feudvar near Mosorin, Židovar in the south Banat but also the necropolises with large number of burials (Stojica gumno in Belegiš, Vojlovica near Pančevo, Vršac–At, Orešac, Ilandža, Velebit near Kanjiža, Mokrin and Ostojeće in the north Banat). The list of these sites is also provided at the end of the text (Map 1).
I EARLY BRONZE AGE CULTURES

The reasons for the emergence of the new period in the prehistoric archaeology – Bronze Age – lie in the change of the ethnic picture within the large area of the Carpathian basin especially Vojvodina as the «contact zone» between Pannonian plain and the Balkans. The cultures, which determined the preceding Eneolithic period or the Copper Age as its synonym, reached their full evolution. The Vučedol culture with advanced copper metallurgy, smelting craftsmanship and richness of material culture was endangered by the emergence of the new tribes, which penetrated in waves from the south Russian steppes along the Danube valley (via

Map 1. Vučedol and Vinkovci sites in the »prehistoric limes« zone

Карта 1. Вучедол и Винковци налазишта у »праисторијској лимес» зони

1. Sarvaš  
2. Aljmos  
3. Đalj  
4. Erdut  
5. Vinkovci  
6. Vukovar  
7. Vučedol  
8. Sotin  
9. Lovas  
10. Sot  
11. Ilok  
12. Nestin  
13. Susen  
14. Svilos  
15. Pecine–Vrdnik  
16. Slankamen  
17. Belegis  
18. Zemun – Govedi brod  
19. Zemun – Gardos  
20. Batajnica – tumul  
21. Vojka – tumul  
22. Gomolava  
23. Petrovaradin
Dobruja) or across the Carpathian pass (the Tisza springs) endangered the tribes living in the east and south part of the Pannonian plain. The autochthonous population offered strong resistance like a barrier to this penetration towards the Danube. The type of settlements, their position and distribution in the area from the Drava confluence with the Danube down to the Sava confluence with the Danube reveal that native population, which had their long evolution (through the Baden and Kostolac culture in this area) remained at their prominent positions. The series of Vučedol settlements from Sarvaš, via Vučedol, Sotin, Vinkovci, Belegiš, Vrdnik, Golobut near Vizić, Petrovaradin and many others still uninvestigated but only registered sites clearly illustrates one sophisticated system of fortified settlements linked into some kind of prehistoric limes, the border between two worlds and two different populations – autochthonous and invasive (Map 2). This other population is represented exclusively by burial mounds of the nomads from the east, the mobile population that did not stay long in one place. The large sacred structures, tumuli, are so far the only testimonies of their presence in the areas of Banat and Bačka. Almost one thousand of the tumuli have been registered within one large project of the Serbian Academy of Science and Art and Novi Sad Department in collaboration with regional museums and offices for protection of cultural monuments. If we take into account that many of these tumuli had been destroyed in the course of soil cultivation then the impression of their abundance is even more convincing. In spite of the differences between the Vučedol culture and the culture of the steppe the influence of newcomers spread also across the Danube so burials under mounds were encountered (although not often) in the territory of Vučedol culture. The examples of this are two investigated tumuli that in the center had the urn with offerings (Batajnica) or pottery damaged by subsequent medieval burials (Vojka near Pazova). The vessels from Batajnica tumulus have been painted in red, ochre color that is another confirmation of the influence of the newly arrived populations in the territory of modern Vojvodina.

The similar system of fortifications purposely organized as defense from aggressive tribes as we know from Gradac in Vučedol was also used for fortifying the settlement at the site Šančine in Belegiš. In the course of small-size investigations on the isolated plateau there were also conducted trail excavations, which revealed that settlement was protected by double ditch with central ridge with palisade on top. Such large works to fortify the settlement did not result from the need to keep away wild animals out and the domestic ones in but without doubt it was the protection from unwanted visitors. When thus fortified individual settlements are linked into a system then it is clear what the fortifications were intended for.

In spite of aspiration to continue peacefully the development of the Vučedol culture it was not possible. The end of the great and last Eneolithic culture could be sensed in its great potential in production of copper objects and its exceptionally decorated “baroque” pottery. It is a rule in the development of cultures and civilizations that after reaching the perfection (in this case in production of pottery and figurines) comes contentment so to say even decadence leading to the emergence of new stylistic traits in decoration, more simple and more modest. This process also experienced the Vuč edol culture, which was replaced in the almost same area, by first genuine Bronze Age culture – Vinkovci culture. This culture not only originated in almost the same territory where Vučedol culture existed (Srem and Slavonia) but also inherited certain pottery shapes. The continuity is sometimes confirmed by vertical stratigraphy at some of the sites, Vizić on the northern slopes of Fruska Gora and to somewhat lesser extent the settlements Šančine and Gradac in Belegiš or Petrovaradin near Novi Sad.

In the other parts of Vojvodina, in the north and south Banat or in north Bačka this process was different because in those areas other cultures existed and developed before the penetration of elements from the steppe. It even seems that climatic and hydrological circumstances had not been favorable for establishing larger settlements. For instance, marshy terrain around Tisza, Moris, Zlatica in the north Banat or in the south Banat around Tamis or Deliblatska peščara did not offer favorable conditions for more complete development of cultures. The loess plateaus above the waters of these rivers, lakes and swamps had been only oases where the life was possible. Hence, it is not by chance that in the period of transition from the Eneolithic to the Early Bronze Age large number of tumuli probably of steppe origin were erected on those plateaus (Perlez, Kindža, Srpski Krstur, Aradjanska Slatinska humka and others). The isolated specimens of the Makó culture (a variant of late Vučedol culture) or similar finds have been encountered at few sites (Kanjiža (Velebit), Senjak near Žabljak and some sites in the north part of Romanian Banat. So the elements of transition from the Eneolithic to the Bronze Age are not clear enough, as it was the case in the territory of Vučedol culture. There is no answer on which substratum has been
established Mokrin (Maros) – Periam culture in the Moriš and Tisza basin and in the north Banat or what happened between so-called Besenstrich pottery in the south Banat and southwest Romania and its predecessor Cotofeni or Kostolac culture? These are the questions, which at this moment must remain unanswered. To this should be added the problem of origin of steppe population, which left exceptionally large quantity of tumuli of undoubtedly steppe origin but not a single settlement in this area (Vojlovica, Jabuka, Perlez etc.). The problem of the end of Eneolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age should be studied through the changes of material culture, way of life, mortuary practice and economy that new population brought in the Vojvodina plains.

When territorial distribution of the Vučedol culture is concerned there is still a problem of its sporadic appearance first in the south Banat and then existence of Vučedol tumuli in the southwest Romania near Moldova Vechi. We can assume for the south Banat that its expansion eastward was blocked by Deliblatska peščara and its active sand. However, the finds near Moldova Vechi are typical for the late Vučedol culture and close to the finds from tumuli in Srem (Vojka, Batajnica) or from the sites in Šumadija. This phenomenon could be explained on the one hand as influence of the mortuary practice from the steppes (tumulus, use of ochre on pottery and the like) and on the other by longer existence of the Vučedol culture even in the time when first Bronze Age cultures (Vinkovci, Makó, Nyírség etc) already emerged. Obviously late Eneolithic cultures continued to exist in some regions and to develop parallel with Early Bronze Age cultures. More precisely the mentioned tumuli from Moldova Vechi and Vučedol finds in the south Banat and east Srem date from the first decades of the 2nd millennium BC.

Immediately after this process three strong cultural cores have been created in the larger part of Vojvodina and they on one hand mark the stabilization of cultures but at the same time indicate disintegration of the territory. It is reflected first of all in stronger differentiation of the areas of the Vinkovci culture – Srem where it absolutely prevails, then south Banat with Besenstrich and Stempel pottery and northern Banat where Moriš (Mokrin – Periam) culture has emerged. The strong stylistic differences are first of all the result of different substances from which new cultures emerged and on the other hand of different influences to which various parts of Vojvodina were submitted in the period of transition from the Eneolithic to the Bronze Age.

After dramatic changes, which happened in the end of the Eneolithic period the period of peace ensued and it seems the gradual evolution of the cultures of the new era. The smallest problem in explanation of those changes is the evolution of the Vučedol culture into the Vinkovci culture (Vinkovci – Somogvár). In Srem and also in the south Hungary the new culture preserved not only the pottery shapes but sometimes even remained in the locations of its predecessors. The excavations at some sites in Fruška Gora (Golokut near Vizič, Gradina in Vrdnik, Petrovaradinska tvrdjava and even Šančina and Gradac in Belegić) revealed that Vučedol horizon was overlaid by the Vinkovci layer. Something that seems significant for the Early Bronze Age in the territory of Srem previously occupied by the Vučedol culture is the fact that architecture of settlement had changed although they were in the same location. First, after substantially built houses of megaron or apsidal type of the Vučedol culture the houses of the Vinkovci culture are modest habitations sometimes consisting of two joined rather small pit dwellings roofed by thatch or other impermanent material. This type of pit dwellings was discovered at Golokut and in the periphery of Zemun (Šljunka). Second, it is obvious that there was no more the existential threat from the steppe tribes so there was no need to fortify the settlements and old fortifications have not been restored. The new Vinkovci culture abandoned copper for production of jewelry, tools or weapons and bronze objects occurred more often and sometimes even the objects of gold (Orolik in western Srem and Šljunka near Zemun). The Vinkovci pottery gradually abandoned Vučedol forms and accepted the vessels of different shapes. The decoration had become of secondary importance and if it is present at all on the vessels it is of utilitarian character – roughening of part or the entire vessel, crude incised lines and very rarely the bowls were decorated with herringbone motif. The all investigated sites in Vojvodina particularly in Srem abound in the pottery finds. Such is the case at Ilok fortification, at Vinkovci, at Gradina near Šid (Bosut II), Golokut near Vizič, Petrovaradin, Vrdnik, Belegić and all the way to Zemun (Šljunka). The similar situation is encountered at the sites in Hungary where this culture but slightly changed is known as Somogyvar culture.

The bowls with extremely splayed rims prevail among the pottery shapes and there are also many one-handled beakers, which greatly differs from the Vučedol specimens and there is also large number of deep pithoi with roughened lower segment. As we said the decoration is almost entirely lacking if we ignore
rare carelessly executed incisions on the bowls. Two shapes could be considered exclusive within material culture of Vinkovci and Somogyvar culture. It is the vessel of cylindrical shape, without profilation and with short or tunnel-like handles on the rim. As far as we know this is a unique phenomenon recorded in the material culture of the Early Bronze Age. Along with this shape we consider smaller or larger jars with strap handle on the high neck and miniature handle on the opposite side as characteristic of this culture. These pottery shapes were encountered at almost all investigated sites in Srem (Ilok, Gradina on Bosut, Vizić, Petrovaradin etc.) but they were also registered across the Sava river to the south as far as Priboj.

In the territory of south Banat where in the Early Bronze Age only scattered fragments of Vučedol pottery were found but not the settlements the Vinkovci culture did not develop. This territory as well as the south part of Romanian Banat was occupied by the bearers of Pit Grave culture of the steppes or on the other hand by the late Cotofeni culture. One specific culture with coarse pottery decorated with broomstroke motif or «textiles impression» developed on this basis. It is known in literature under various names (Foeni, Gornea–Vođenac, Besenstrich or Stempel decorated pottery). It could be said that in the south of Hungary, and in our country in the Tisza valley and in the part of Bačka contemporary to this culture is the above mentioned Makó culture – the final reflection of the Vučedol style. It is absent in the south Banat and there at the same time existed one only recently identified culture investigated in Pančevo at the site »Donja Varoš« (R. Rašajski, Dž. Gačić). S. Stanimirov-Grčki wrote rather comprehensive text about this culture and on the basis of this text it could be concluded that it was a new culture dating from the earliest phase of the Early Bronze Age. The two-handled beakers with two handles are leading shapes but one footed goblet with elements of post-Vučedol time (Makó group) is chronologically very important.

The biconical beakers with long strap handles joining the rim and the lower cone are rather numerous in the unpublished material (often chance finds) from the territory of Pančevo and Vršac. There are as a rule two handles on the beaker. They are known except from Pančevo (»Donja Varoš«) also in large quantity from the site near Ivanovo, then from multilayered site near Omljica and from the sites near Kolin, Bela Crkva, Skorenovac and Vrsac. Sometime earlier they have been attributed to the »Pančevo–Omljica« group because of the lacking of more precise data. However, as a result of investigations of Romanian and our archaeologists this pottery was determined in the pre–Vatin horizon as »Pančevo – Donja Varoš horizon« and as the earliest Bronze Age phenomenon in the area of the south Banat (S. Grčki-Stanimirov).

The long-lasting Moris (Mokrin–Periam) culture belongs by one of its segments to the very beginning of the Bronze Age in these regions and in the neighboring areas in the watershed of Moris, Zlatica and Tisza. Neither in Mokrin the largest and most completely investigated necropolis of this culture nor at other neighboring necropoles and settlements (Periam, Szöreg, Desz, Pitvaros, Novi Kneževac or Ostojicevo) have been achieved clear distinction between phases of development in spite of the fact that it developed during rather long period of time and that many necropoles with numerous graves were discovered (Pitvaros with 43, Desz «A» with 83 graves, Battonya with 81) and at many smaller necropoles the trial excavations were conducted (Novi Kneževac, Beba Veche with around ten graves). The best investigated site in our territory is the necropolis near Mokrin where M. Girić discovered 312 graves and tried to classify them into three chronological phases (periods). Besides large quantity and heterogeneity of grave goods, their high technology of manufacture and occurrence of so far unknown materials for production of ornaments (faience beads, certain types of shells) the special value of this culture are gold objects (29 in 14 graves). They confirm that high level of development was reached and that necropolis was in use during many generations. It could be said that necropolis had been in use during the entire Early Bronze Age that is in absolute dates the time from 1900 BC to 1600 BC. Some radiocarbon analyses provided the date 1550±50 BC for the grave from the later period. The parallel with other Early Bronze Age cultures in Vojvodina confirms similar chronological span. The Vinkovci culture, which is also the long-lasting phenomenon belongs to the same period as the Moris culture but there is the assumption that it could have terminated slightly earlier, around 1700–1600 BC. The identical conclusions with slight corrections could be drawn on the basis of comparative tables offered by some Romanian archaeologists for the neighboring regions (for instance Romanian part of Banat). M. Guma for example dates the end of Vučedol culture around 2000 BC with assumption that late variant of this culture – Makó- lasted to 1900 BC. The cultural groups Besenstrich-Textilmuster (Foeni, Gornea and other variants) are contemporary with the Moris culture. If we accept such chronological relations of the
Early Bronze Age cultures then interpretation of chronological development of cultures in the south Banat should sustain certain corrections. It is obvious that rather small (according to the quantity of pottery finds) settlements of the Besenstrich or Pančevo – Donja Varoš type did not exist after 1800 BC. After that started the development of early Vatin culture (Pančevo – Omoljica) in the south Banat. This culture according to many sites and diversity of the material culture lasted longer, up to the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age. Certain finds in the closed associations (pits or graves), objects from other cultures, for example encrusted pottery indicate intrusions and influences from the north and northwest into the south parts of the Pannonian plain. Those movements mostly run along the Danube including northeastern Croatia (Baranja and part of Slavonia) and Srem (Gradina on the Bosut river, Gomolava III, burial at Vizic, Popov Salaš etc.). The emergence of encrusted pottery on the Vatin sites and its transformation into Szereemle group around 1600 BC marks the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age. In the territory of Vojvodina it was the time of abrupt development of many cultures heterogeneous in stylistic traits, material culture, richness of pottery decoration and making of distinct figures, especially anthropomorphic deities like Dupljaja chariot, figurines with bell-shaped skirt or cult objects.

Among the complex of cultures, which developed in the south Pannonia in the end of Early Bronze Age the Vatin culture without doubt left the most significant trace. In contrast to many previous groups, the Vatin group once again managed to integrate large areas of the south Pannonia and to establish permanent settlements with long-lasting dwelling structures. It also managed to expand in the area between the rivers Sava and Danube and to establish its settlements to the south of the Danube as far as Šumadija and the Morava valley (Jagodina). Judging from the stratigraphy of some sites (Židovar, Omoljica, Gomolava, Ljuljaci etc.) this culture lasted longer than other other contemporaneous cultures. The divisions into many phases suggested by many investigators (M. Garašanin, R. Rašajski, I. Bona, M. Gribić and this author) proved to be correct. The differences between early and advanced phase of advanced and late phase are evident and they confirm assumption about gradual evolution of the Vatin culture through three chronological periods – Omoljica phase, early Vatin and late Vatin phase. To make it rather simple, considering the typology of the pottery to the early phase belong simple, rarely decorated vessels (shapes that could be identified as of Omoljica type or those from Popov Salaš near Kac). The later pottery is decorated with volutes or spirals. Finally, one type of decadence in the pottery production occurs on the necropoles with cremation burials of the Belegiš culture or as west Serbian variant of Vatin culture (after M. Garašanin).

Besides large territorial expansion of the bearers of the Vatin culture and the duration of its existence of particular importance are objects made of bone and metal. There are not many cultures in prehistory especially in the Bronze Age that achieved such perfection as that reached in the Vatin culture. The collections of objects from the Banat sites (especially from Vatin and Židovar) but also from the Bronze Age horizon at Vinča are not without reason associated with ornaments from the Mycenaean chamber tombs. Although it is difficult to synchronize these two phenomena the comparison could be of the aesthetic character. The spirals on circular bone plaques, decoration on hollow cylindrical bones, functionally still undetermined objects made of nicely polished bone and finally elements of horse harness (snaffle bit?) represent the peak of craftsmanship as of the art of that time. To all this should be added two bone »musical instruments« from Vinča and numerous gold finds especially from Vatin, Gomolava or Orolik. All these finds indicate that this was the really highly developed culture without equal in its time.

II MIDDLE AND LATE BRONZE AGE CULTURES

The end of Early and beginning of Middle Bronze Age was a process developing to the more or less extent in all Vojvodina regions. In Srem, by the end of Vinkovci culture there were two strong impulses – from the northwest arrived the influence of encrusted Transdanubian pottery and the other local impulse resulted from further development of the Vatin culture manifested as Garašanin said as »west Serbian variant of the Vatin culture«. In the north Banat, on the basis of the Moriš culture emerged Ostojićevo-Gerjen culture. This is the new stylistic phenomenon, which does not differ from the Moriš culture only in pottery shapes, but what is more important in the mortuary practice. The new investigations conducted by M. Girič in Ostojićevo (1981–1991) indicated few new phenomena. In addition to the earlier Moriš graves there are also jar burials (children skeletons) and cremations – urn burials at the necropolis in Ostojićevo. The pottery shapes differ to the great extent from the Moriš type and
stronger influences from the Vatya and Gylvavarsand culture – »Gerjen group of Periam culture« as identified by I. Bona could be noticed.

The process of transformation of Early into the Middle Bronze Age had somewhat different course in the south Banat and that is understandable if we take into account the existence of very strong basis from the earlier phase of the Early Bronze Age manifested in the numerous settlements of the Vatin culture. This culture remained in this area for some time more pressed from one side by strong Verbičioara neighbor and from the other exposed to the continuous pressures of the bearers of Szeremle culture, which from the northwest, from the deep of the Pannonian plain reached to the Serbian Danube valley. The Verbičioara pottery is not a rare find in Banat. It mostly belongs to the advanced phase, which D. Berciu distinguished as Verbičioara III i.e. as the last phase of this culture in our opinion. The development of Vatin and Verbičioara culture terminated during the Middle Bronze Age, more precisely at its very beginning. At first gradually and then more and more aggressively this territory was covered by cultures with encrusted pottery, first of Szeremle type (Vrsac–At, Kovin, Dubovac, Omoljica, Vrsac – Lados etc.), and later those known under the names Dubovac – Žuto brdo, Dubovac – Balta Verde, Žuto brdo – Girla Mare, Dubovac – Žuto brdo – Girla Mare and the like. The intrusion of encrusted pottery covered, considering chronological priority and longer tradition, the area from central Pannonian regions (south and north Transdanubian encrusted pottery), southward it included Bačka (finds from vicinity of Ođaci) then zone of confluence of Tisza and Danube (sites in the Titel plateau area) and in the Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian Danube valley (Dubovac, Dupljaja, Glamija, Vajuga, Balta Verde, Cirta, Orsoja, Balej) it made one long-lasting culture with lavishly decorated pottery, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines, cult objects and the like. Only small segment of Srem and only during its earlier phase was covered by this culture. There was somewhat different development in this part of Vojvodina including the Serbian territory across the Sava and the Danube from the second half of the Middle Bronze Age. There are only few elements that could explain the emergence of the Belegić culture. However, the investigated necropoles near Belegić, Surčin and in the vicinity of Belgrade (Karaburma and Rospi Ćuprija) with large number of graves (more than hundred on each mentioned necropolis) suggest that life continued for rather long time. The earliest graves could be dated to the second half of the Middle Bronze Age and burials in the necropoles could be followed to the beginning of the Early Iron Age, in the absolute chronology from 1500 to 1000 BC.

It is difficult to establish with certainty the exact borderlines between the cultures of Middle and Late Bronze Age in Vojvodina. In some parts like for instance Banat this line is within the Dubovac–Žuto brdo culture. In the northern parts of Vojvodina the transition to the Late Bronze Age was evolving via the Hügelgräber culture while in Srem it was developing within the Belegić culture. The frameworks of these events are caused first of all by intrusion of HGK whose »Carpathian variant« as denoted by A. Tocić descended southward along the Tisza and through the region between rivers Tisza and Danube. The Belegić culture belongs to this period but it is not directly connected although in its early phase there are some elements from the north. The border between Belegić culture and HGK was somewhat to the north of Novi Sad with note that necropoles of Belegić culture were encountered in Srem and south Banat while north part of Vojvodina almost to the confluence of Tisza and Danube was at first, to the middle of the 2nd millenium under the influence of HGK and its variants and later in the Late Bronze Age the larger segment of Bačka was covered by early phases of the Urfield culture. The necropolis near Idjos (variant of HGB complex) and some other sites with early phase of channelled pottery, some kind of proto-Gava culture date from this period in the north Banat.

In contrast to the Bronze Age cultures that we know about only on the basis of investigated necropoles (e.g., Morić culture) or on the basis of investigated settlements (Vinkovci culture) we have data from settlements as well as from necropoles for the cultures of Middle and Late Bronze Age. The ratio is not always identical and it is first of all the consequence of more attractive investigations of necropoles (rich and numerous finds) in comparison with settlement remains, which often come from temporary habitation. Few rather large systematical investigations of the multilayered sites yielded precious results not so much in the representative finds but in establishing the position within the development of the Bronze Age in general. One of good examples is Gomolava where the Bronze Age horizons are not abundant in material but offer enough data for stratigraphy and periodization of the Bronze Age cultures. The same situation is with Židovar when Banat is concerned or Feudvar near Mošorin where the stratigraphy is equally important for the development of cultures in Bačka but also for the territory to the south of the Titel.
plateau. Thanks to the combination of all these data the development of Middle and Late Bronze Age cultures is well known. In the entire territory of Vojvodina it could be studied through the evolution of encrusted pottery on the one hand and the Belegiš culture on the other. One gravitates more towards the Danube valley (to the south Banat and across the Danube) while the other is related to the area between the rivers Sava and Danube. This culture in its later phase made strong thrust also towards the regions where for a long time prevailed the encrusted pottery first of Szeremle type (Vršac–At) and later as we mentioned above the advanced variant of encrusted pottery that we know as Dubovac, Dubovac–Zuto brdo, Dubovac–Gîrîa Mare–Cîrna etc.

The cultural and historical development of Vojvodina in the Late Bronze Age is accompanied by the phenomenon called «horizon of bronze hoards of Ha A1–A2«. Their concentration is especially conspicuous in the areas occupied by later phases of the Belegiš culture especially in Srem and south Banat. M. Petrescu-Dimbovita mapped them very well already in 1977 in the neighboring Romania while for our regions K. Vinski Gasparini and Z. Vinski listed the hoards from «South Pannonia» and M. Garasănîn suggested on two occasions the synthesis and periodization of the hoards in Serbia (1983 and 1994). When territory of Vojvodina is concerned the works of these authors should be supplemented with works of D. Popović (hoards from Srem) and R. Rašajski and Lj. Bukvić (hoards from Banat). Something that could be concluded with certainty is territorial overlapping of the later phase of the Belegiš culture and horizon of hoards denoted by M. Garasănîn in his periodization as horizon II. For that matter are important direct data, which indicate the connection of later phase of Belegiš culture with hoards of Ha A1–A2 period confirmed at the site Ekonomija Sava near Jakovo in Srem and in Romanian Banat within well known hoards Cornușel, Fizes, Lubicova etc. Similar conclusion is suggested by the data from the necropoles of «Gava» i.e. Belegiš II culture published by Lj. Bukvić in 2000. The most of 34 mapped bronze hoards originate from central Banat (8 hoards) and south Banat (24 hoards), the territory where almost 70 sites (necropoles, settlements and individual finds) of the later phase of Belegiš culture were registered.

As the end of Bronze Age in the south Pannonia and in Srem could be generally considered at one hand the end of Belegiš II/III and Gava (Medias) culture and on the other the time of above mentioned horizon of bronze hoards from Ha A1–A2. It was the time around 1000 BC. The occurrence of new cultures that were acquainted with production of iron tools, ornaments and weapons marked the new period – Early Iron Age. However, it should be emphasized that this transition was gradual and evolved during rather long period of time. For example at Kalakača with the material of the new culture and the new period there was also found although sporadically the black burnished channeled pottery of the final phase of the Belegiš culture. Similar situation was encountered at some sites of Gornea – Kalakača type where channeled pottery existed parallel with the pottery of Kalakača style. Besides the sites in Srem – Kalakača, Gomolava IV there are also Satchinez, Dejani, Giroc and others in the Romanian Banat. In this way the continuity of life was established in the territory of south Pannonia, Srem and Romanian Banat at the turn of the 2nd into the 1st millennium BC when the new period – the Early Iron Age had started.

III BRONZE AGE CHRONOLOGY

The chronology of the Bronze Age in Vojvodina taking into account direct and indirect data of radiocarbon analyses could be summarized at this moment as follows:

a) The Bronze Age in total from the end of Vučedol culture and its variants (e.g. Makò) to the end of the Belegiš culture and Ha A1–A2 horizon of hoards covers the time span from 1900 BC to 1000 BC.

b) Further distinguishing of the basically tripartite division of the Bronze Age suggests the following situation:

Early Bronze Age 1900–1600 BC. From this period date the settlements and necropoles in Vojvodina that belong to the following cultures: Vinkovci culture in Srem, Besenstirch and Stempel pottery in south Banat, Moris culture in the north Banat and Makò group was sporadically present in north Bačka (ca 1900 BC). Some of these cultures lasted longer and some are recorded only as short-lasting phenomena. The Moris culture, which covers the entire Early Bronze Age until the occurrence of Ostojicevo–Gerjen necropoles in the northeastern Vojvodina (1600/1500 BC) comes no doubt into the first group. Similar is the case with long-lasting Vatin culture. It displaced Vinkovci culture in the east Srem and then remained there until the intrusion of encrusted Transdanubian pottery and continued its existence until the occurrence of Szeremle i.e. Dubovac–Zuto brdo–Cîrna–Balta Verde.
complex with encrusted pottery. Territorially it crossed the borders of its home area (Banat) and emerged to the east in Romania, to the south in Šumadija and to the west its late variant, »west Serbian variant of Vatin culture« after M. Garašanin existed until 1400 BC.

If we strictly apply the data obtained by radiocarbon method the dates will be slightly different but not much considering the dates suggested by classic method. Thus for instance dates for Vučedol culture are around 2500 BC, for Vinkovci—Somogyvar between 2400 BC and 2000 BC and for the Moriš culture between 2400 BC and 1600 BC.

The chronological data for the Middle Bronze Age indicate that cultures developing during this period originated between 1600–1500 BC and lasted until 1200 BC. It was the time of domination of the encrusted pottery of Dubovac–Žuto brdo type in Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian Danube valley and in the north of Vojvodina prevailed the Hügelgräber complex (Velebit, Hajdukovo etc) the part of which to the certain extent was also Ostojčev–Gerjen group. In Srem and around the confluence of the Sava with the Danube prevailed necropoles of the early phase of Belegiš culture that are chronologically bordering or overlapping the cultures of Dubovac–Žuto brdo type. In absolute dates it is 1500 BC (if we consider also the Szeremle encrusted pottery of At type in Banat) and 1200 BC when this culture disappeared.

The borderline between the Middle and Late Bronze Age is difficult to determine precisely. The transition evolved within identical cultural complexes, the Belegiš culture, the variant of encrusted pottery and the Hügelgräber complex. The transition from decoration with cord ornament or incised lines to the simple channeling marks the turning point in the area of the Belegiš culture in Srem. The changes in decoration from Szeremle–At group towards the Dubovac–Žuto brdo style are characteristic of the south Banat and even of Serbian Danube valley in general. The emergence of the channeled pottery in the larger areas of Vojvodina, on the Srem necropoles (Surčin, Belegiš) in the south Banat area (Vojlovica, Opovo–Beli breg, Kovačica – Vinograd) marks without doubt the Late Bronze Age that lasted until the beginning of the 1st millennium BC. The more recent investigations in Romania and at sites in Vojvodina, mostly necropoles but also the settlements (Feudvar, Židovar, Ekonomija Sava and others) suggest the need to distinguish the third phase of the Belegiš culture. In this phase the elements of Gava complex like channeled garlands, oblique channels (twisting) at the junction of upper and lower cones of urns and bowls were particularly emphasized. The occurrence of Gava elements at the Romanian sites is characteristic of the finds from great tumulus »Gramurada lui Ticiu« near Susani or the necropolis »Ticvanul Marc« in Romanian Banat.

The final phase of channeled pottery in the Serbian Danube valley is distinguished by above mentioned graves from Vojlovica, then finds from Kovačica, Opovo – Beli breg, from the settlement Gradište near Idjos and the pottery from Ekonomija Sava near Jakovo in east Srem. Chronologically these finds should be dated in the period of transition from the 2nd into the 1st millennium, the period of bronze hoards of Ha A1–A2 horizon marking thus the end of Bronze Age in Vojvodina (1000–900 BC).
Map 2. Major excavated sites in Vojvodina

Karta 2. Glavna nalazišta u Vojvodini

SOURCES FOR WRITING OF THIS WORK:

A. IMPORTANT INVESTIGATED SITES

Srem:
1. Gradina on the Bosut near Batrovci (Šid)
2. Gomolava near Hrtkovci
3. Kalakača near Beška
4. Petrovaradin fortress
5. Gradina in Stari Slankamen
6. Pecine near Vrdnik
7. Golokut near Vizić
8. Stojica gumno and Gradac in Belegiš
9. Ekonomija Sava near Jakovo (hoard and settlement)
10. Asfaltna baza and Šljunkara near Zemun

Banat:
11. Pančevo, Vatrogasni dom
12. Opovo, Beli breg
13. Vinogradi in Kovačica
14. Vojlovica, Rafinerija nafta

15. Vršac
16. Vršac, At
17. Vršac, Ludoš
18. Dubovac, Selo
19. Orešac, Selo
20. Židovar near Jasenovo (Orešac)
21. Crvenka near Vatin
22. Vatin, Selo
23. Idjoš, Gradište
24. Ostojićevo, Selo
25. Mokrin near Kikinda

Bačka:
26. Feudvar near Mošorin
27. Popov salaš near Kać
28. Djepfeld near Doroslovo
29. Velebit near Kanjiža
30. Hajdukovo near Subotica
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Резиме: НИКОЛА ТАСИЋ, Српска академија наук и уметности

ИСТОРИЈСКА СЛИКА РАЗВОЈА КУЛТУРА БРОНЗАНОГ ДОБА ВОЈВОДИНЕ

Јужне области Панонске низије добро су истражене када се мисли на време бронзаног доба, пре минулих векови пре н.е. Више од 120 година врше се мања и већа истражи- вања, присућа материјал и обрађују сакупљени подаци. Све то пружа могућност да се процес развоја културе брон- заног доба сагледа као процес појаве, еволуције и нестанка културе, њихове стилске и типолошке карактеристике, еко- номије и хронолошког вредновања. Детаљном анализом дошло се до закључака који показују да су се током овог периода одвијала процеси интеграције и деинтеграције култура, њихов настанак и нестанак. У овом раду поштују смо да пратимо те процесе. Он би укратко могло да се су- мирију на:

а) Процес настанка културе раног бронзаног доба и то оних које се у Срему формирају на основама финалне фазе вучедолске културе. То је винчовачка култура која запосе- да исте локације и има сличну функцију у Срему као и ста- рија култура. То је изградња система утврђених насеља која су подизана на десној обали Дунава као брана надирању позних стефских култура. Њихове фронтификационаче карак- теристике, географски положај и други елементи указују да добро организован систем одбране, нека врста «приправљеног лимеса» (Карта 1). Подручје Војводине је у овом тренутку деинтегрисано чињеницом да се у Банату формира стилски другачија култура, моришка (Мокрин-Перчић) а на југу од ње «Панчево – Доња Варош» а нешто касније рана ватинска култура. Она је за кратко време интегрисала велик простор и долази прецел на југу Саве и Дунав.

б) Други значајни преломни тренутак у развоју културе бронзаног доба чини продор поседила инкрустоване, најпре Трансилаубијске, затим Српске и најзад комплексе Дубо- вац – Жуто Брдо – GГта маце, Стпч, Олбова, Балеј. Развијена фаза ове културе се Дунавом према југозападној Румунији и северозападној Бугарској. У исто време долн- ном Тисе на простор северног Баната и Бачке појављује се «Карпатска варијанта» Hugelgräber културе.

с) Најзад у позон бронзаном добу у Срему, јужном Ба- нату и у мањој мери преко Дунава, на основано Белегиш култура, увеће старије фазе, појављују се велике некрополе са црном глачаном керамиком «Габа типа» која ће интегри- сати велики простор од Карпата, па преко Трансилваније у Банат до Срема. Појава ове керамике која се типолошком опредељује у Белегиш II – Габа, Медијас у Румунiji, прати распространет комплекс «остава бронзаних предмета вре- меня Нa A1–A2» како се поznате коп нас у Срему, на це- лом простору Баната у Трансилванији и румунском Полу- нављају и даље. Са њима се завршава бронзано доба и на просторима Војводине.