With the framework of the project The prehistory of northeastern Serbia – archaeological reconnaissance and excavations, in 2004 and 2005, detailed archaeological reconnaissance was carried out of the broader hinterland of Đerdap. Based on information obtained from local inhabitants, several localities were discovered. On that occasion, on Mount Miroč, above the Đerdap Gorge, we found the locality Mihajlov ponor (Fig. 1), where we observed circular stone constructions with an accentuated, outer ring.1

The locality of Mihajlov ponor is situated at about 13 km northeast of the village of Miroč, at the foot of the hills known as Konjska and Visoki Ćukar on one side, and Ćoka Grekuluja on the other, at a minor elevation, surrounded by karst valleys and covering an area of roughly one hectare. In that area, we registered more than thirty stone constructions. The peripheral rings were built of natural rock and broken stones, and inside were smaller rings formed of smaller broken stones. The space between them was strewn with small pieces of broken stone and earth. We saw that some stone constructions did not have a smaller, internal ring and that the space was encircled by a large ring, simply strewn with small pieces of stone and soil. The diameter of these stone constructions ranged from 4 m to 12 m, while their height varied from 0.5 m to 1.3 m.2

In the course of two shorter campaigns, during 2005–2006, we explored two constructions (7 and 9), as well as a stone wall situated approximately 400 m southeast of Mihajlov ponor. In the campaign during 2007, three more constructions were examined (10, 10a and 12; Fig. 2), and, in our search for their builders, a small test-pit was opened on the plateau, at a distance of around 70 m from the first constructions (31) on Mihajlov ponor.

In the first campaign in 2005, we examined construction 7, which had a diameter of 10.9 × 9.2 m, and was damaged. Part of the outer ring, consisting of two to three rows of larger broken stones, had been demolished on the western side, while the northeastern side of the inner, smaller circle, was preserved. The construction was formed on a rocky foundation, descending like a cascade from east to west, and was levelled out with a layer of small broken stones (limestone and sandstone) mixed with reddish soil, the depth of which ranged from 0.1 to 0.4 m.

1 Circular stone constructions were also discovered above Brza Palanka on the so-called Beljanski put, and subsequently in the locality known as Ploče in the Đerdap national park, where a settlement was found with incrusted pottery of the Žuto Brdo–Gîrla Mare type (Fig. 1). A Late Bronze Age settlement was discovered in the village of Miroč (Žuto Brdo–Gîrla Mare culture), while north of the village, at the foot of the hill called Kopana glavica, a multi-layered village was discovered, belonging to the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age.

Outside of this construction, we noted a layer of beaten earth and smaller pieces of broken stone (*a walking path*). It was particularly noticeable in the western and northern section. In the western part of the construction, we discovered a smaller surface of beaten and slightly baked soil on a surface of around one m².

In the peripheral sections of the construction, several fragments of pottery were found from the Early Iron Age. These fragments were left in fissures (pockets) in the rock, with the stones and earth used to even out the surface of the construction. Approximately in the centre of the construction, three glass paste beads were discovered, of various sizes, with about four pairs of eyes, the edges of which were white (T. I/1–3). Close by, we discovered two medieval arrowheads and a medieval knife, the tip of which was missing (T. I/6). One arrowhead was in the shape of a willow leaf, with an accentuated central rib (T. I/4), whereas the other was triangular, with an accentuated central rib and a well preserved conically shaped quiver (T. I/5).³

Southeast of the spot where the beads were discovered, we found a well-preserved, massive, iron arrowhead of the Ferigile type, shaped triangularly, with prolonged, notched blades, close to the top of which there were two small perforations (T. I/8).⁴

On the eastern side of the construction, a small bronze, unilateral spring fibula was found with its foot missing, with a narrow, spindle-like, high bow, decorated with notches (T. I/7). Apart from sporadic fragments of ceramics, larger fragments of a conically shaped cup were found, with a part of the handle overlapping the rim (T. II/1). Not far from the cup, an iron loop was discovered, most probably part of a horse’s harness, as well as a small iron belt-lock (T. I/12–13).⁵

In the southeastern part of the construction, we observed a large surface of beaten earth, where we found several fragments of pottery. Apart from the crude make of the majority, ceramic vessels were found that had been made of better quality clay, with polished surfaces, baked to a brownish-black, black or a grey colour. We singled out a small, cylindrical vessel, with a gently widened rim, a long neck, a gently

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³ Пековић 2006, 37; Пековић, Јевтић 2007, 128.
accentuated belly, and a flat bottom. It was worked from a poorer quality of clay with additions of small grains of sand, and baked to a brownish red colour. The neck and belly of the vessel were decorated with two rows of vertical, diagonal lines (T. II/2). Of the larger vessels, we distinguished pots of a cruder make, with polished surfaces, four linguiform handles, decorated with a relief in the form of a band imprinted with fingertips or simple, slanting engraved lines (T. II/3–4). There were a few pots with flat, gently accentuated rims, rounded bellies, and tongue-shaped handles attached to them (T. II/5). In addition, we recorded small pots of a finer grain of pottery, with

6 Гарашанин 1971, 54, Fig. 483; Jovanović 1972, 12; Jovanović 1974, 16; Jevtić 1983, 12, T. XI/10.
slender handles shaped like a horseshoe (T. II/6–8). Bowls were one of the most frequent types of vessel. They were mainly of earthenware, with polished surfaces of a grey, light brown and, more rarely, of a reddish outer surface. Their profilation varied, curving more or less inwards to the rim, which was flat or twisted. The bottom was mostly flat (T. II/9–10). Some bowls had small tongue-shaped handles (T. II/11). Particularly distinct was a bowl with a handle shaped like a spool, moulded on the rim itself (T. II/12). There were also a few bowls with an S profile (T. II/13), and we found a lesser number of fragments of a biconically shaped cup, of a longer conical shape, a gently, inward curving, smooth rim and flat bottom. A band-like handle joined the neck and the rim of the vessel (T. II/14).

Among the pottery in this part of the construction (Fig. 3), we discovered several animal bones, belonging to a roe deer, a deer and a mountain goat. Traces of lacerations could be seen on some of the bones. We
found a carbonised, human mandible that had been brought here and buried as an offering. We established that it had belonged to a younger male.\(^7\)

Apart from the excavation of this construction, research was also carried out with a metal detector. We examined the constructions that had sustained the most damage by random diggers. Inside the constructions designated with numbers 1, 10 and 11, among the stones or immediately beneath, we found several small metal objects. In construction 1, two large iron arrowheads were discovered, which belonged to the Ferigile type (T. I/9‡10), part of a knife and an arc-shaped iron knife with a single blade, with a well-preserved, triangular spine (T. I/15).\(^8\) In construction 10, one more arrowhead of the same type was found (T. I/11) and the bow of a small iron fibula (T. I/14) and, in construction 11, a fragmented lance with an accentuated middle rib and an intact quiver, on which there were perforations for fastening (T. I/16), as well as several small, iron rivets and nails.

Approximately 600 m northeast of the locality (forest section 48) a completely demolished stone construction was discovered, of a diameter of more than 20 m and, about 100 m farther eastwards, there were about ten smaller ones (location II, Pic. 1).

Construction 9 was examined during the campaign in 2006. Its dimensions were 8.2 × 8.5 m, and it was situated several meters southeast of construction 7. The massive outer ring, consisting in some places of five or six rows of broken stones, was partly demolished on its northwestern side.\(^9\) The inside of the construction, which was strewn with stones and in the middle of which there was a smaller stone ring, was also demolished, that is to say, the stones were scattered around the vicinity.

Depending on the incline of the terrain, the interior of the construction was levelled out with small broken stones mixed with dark brown, loose soil of a thickness of 0.15 to 0.5 m. Small pits scarred the entire southern part of the construction; however, even in those sections we discovered three metal objects. There were two damaged, iron arrowheads with two perforations and the small bow of an iron fibula.\(^10\) The levelling layer in this part of the construction ranged from 0.25 to 0.5 m. Here, we found a large number of fragments of the bellies of crudely made vessels, in which large grains of sand had been added, which had polished surfaces. They had been badly baked and were of a brown or black colour. We noted pieces of small pots with gently outward curving, wavy rims, as well as parts of more finely made bowls, among which we singled out the fragment of a black, smoothly polished bowl, with a rim curving inwards.

The situation was identical in the northern part of the construction. Namely, fragments of pottery had been left in the „pockets“ between the natural rocks when the space was being levelled. The levelling layer ranged between 0.15 and 0.2 m. Several fragments of more finely crafted bowls were discovered here, with polished surfaces, well baked to nuances of black. Their profilation varied, their rims curved more or less inwards and were flat or twisted. We singled out the piece of a small vessel with a flat accentuated rim, beneath which was a horizontal rib. Immediately beneath the rib, the vessel was ornamented with vertical slashes in the shape of a letter V, framed in a series of punctations. We found a lesser number of fragments of large, crudely made vessels, with additions of large grained sand. They had a rough surface, and were poorly baked. Some of the fragments were decorated with moulded bands imprinted with fingertips. We also found several band-like handles of different sizes.\(^11\)

In this part, our finds included several metal artefacts. These were the bow of an iron fibula, the bow of a small bronze unilateral spring fibula and part of a small iron loop for a belt.\(^12\)

After the construction was emptied (Fig. 4), the area around it was cleared to a width of approximately two meters, and a layer of 0.1 m was excavated. As in the case of the previous construction, here, at the intersection of the southwestern to northwestern and the northeastern to the southeastern part of the construction, we also recorded a layer of hard beaten earth, mixed with tiny stones (a so-called walking-path). In this spot, we found a certain quantity of pottery fragments, similar to the forms discovered in the construction itself. In the southwestern part, immediately behind the ring of the construction, we

\(^7\) We thank our colleagues, Ž. Mikić and S. Stefanović, for their kind assistance.

\(^8\) Пеконић 2006, 35.

\(^9\) Пеконић, Жерних 2007, 132. Compared to the situation encountered in 2005, several more constructions were partly dug up (8, 9, 12 and 13).

\(^10\) Пеконић, Жерних 2007, 134, fig. 6/2–4.

\(^11\) Пеконић, Жерних 2007, 135, fig. 7.

\(^12\) Пеконић, Жерних 2007, 134, fig. 6/5–6, 8.
discovered a small bronze unilateral spring fibula with a foot of beaten bronze and a preserved fastening pin of the Marvinci – Gogosu type. Afterwards, the space was checked with a metal detector, revealing the existence of several metal finds. In the northwestern part, at about 0.8 m outside the construction, we found a damaged triangular arrowhead with two perforations, the upper part of a round, bronze pendent of the Ghidici type, a large, damaged, iron belt-lock, and an iron knife with a single blade.

Roughly, two meters from the northwestern part of the construction, at a depth of 0.25 m, we came across a collective find of iron poitrel of the Szentes-Vekerzug type (Fig. 5). In the same place, there were complete poitrels, and pieces of two more, different poitrels. The ends of the complete poitrels and the piece of the incomplete one had the shape of a gryphon or horse’s head, which clearly indicates a Scythian element.

Approximately 400 m southeast of Mihaiov ponor, at the foot of the Čoka Grekuluj hill, we discovered about ten more stone constructions and the remains of a stone wall (location III, Fig. 1). This stone wall separated the plateau with stone constructions from the larger and deeper round karst valley, and its width varied from 0.8 to 1.2 m, while the length was roughly 30 m. (Fig. 6). Like the constructions, natural rock was also used for building the stone wall, on which larger pieces of broken stones were arranged in a row. The stone wall followed the natural formation of the rock, that is, the line of the terrain. Although scattered in certain parts, especially in the southeastern part, at one end, it was possible to distinguish a protected entrance and, at the other end, this stone wall created an arc, forming a massive rampart, on top of which a circular construction was formed. The

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13 Peković, Jevtić 2007, 134, fig. 6/7.
14 Peković, Jevtić 2007, 134, fig. 6/9–10.
16 In the Kornjet locality, in the village of Podgorac near Boljevac, our colleague Stojić found a similar stone wall. Stojić 2006, 77, fig. 3–4.
Fig. 5 Iron poitrils of the Szentes-Vekerzug type

Сл. 5 Гвоздене џисалије йишна Szentes-Vekerzug

Fig. 6 Eastern section of the rampart, location III

Сл. 6 Истойчицни гео бедема, локација III
Fig. 7 Appearance of freed section of the rampart, view from the south, location III

Fig. 8 Appearance of construction 10 before excavations, from the south

Fig. 9 Appearance of construction 10 after excavations, from the south
entire western side of the stone wall was cleared, and a cross-section was made through the circular construction above the rampart in a north-south direction, in a length of 5 m and width of 1.3 to 2.1 m, depending on the arrangement of the natural rocks (Fig. 7). No pottery fragments were found here at all, but there was a certain amount of baked earth, and larger pieces of iron slag. Moreover, after the cross-section was made through this construction, we were not sure whether it merely involved a layer of debris from the stone wall, or whether it was some sort of structure, the purpose of which was unclear.17

In July 2007, we explored three more constructions (10, 12 and 10a).18 Parts of the interior of the constructions 10 and 12 had been dug up, while 10a, apart from a smaller pit, was intact.

Construction 10 with its diameter of $5.2 \times 5$ m, in contrast to the majority in this locality, had an excellently preserved outer ring (Fig. 8). Its southern section was formed out of several rows of broken stones, ranging from a height of 0.7 to 1.1 m, while its northern part consisted of the natural formation of the rocks, between which broken stones had been inserted, and the height ranged from 0.2 to 0.4 m. The interior space of the construction was strewn with large and small pieces of broken stone, mixed with earth. There was a large hole in the south-western part of this construction.19 The levelling layer (of dark brown, loose earth, mixed with crushed stone) of the undamaged western part, depending on the rocky base that descended like a cascade from north to south, varied from 0.2 to 0.5 m. Here, in the fissures of the rock, only a few fragments of the bellies of vessels were found with intact, tongue-shaped handles (T. III/4–6). These were parts of large, crudely made vessels with additions of large grained sand, or crushed stone, badly baked, and their colours varied from brownish-red to brownish-grey. In that part of the construction, several iron items were discovered, which had fallen into the deeper fissures in the rocks. These were fragmented and a whole arrowhead with two perforations of the Ferigile type, part of the plating on the handle of a knife and a piece of a sewing needle (T. V/1, 8). The eastern part of the construction was only superficially devastated. Besides fragments of the bellies of large vessels and parts of tunnel-like, hollow handles, in this section, we found several fragments of smaller pots made of better quality clay, with smooth, unprofiled rims (T. III/1–2). Some were decorated with a series of horizontal, finger tip imprints (T. III/3). There were fewer examples of ceramics of finer make. They consisted of pieces of biconical cups with an unprofiled, flat bottom and funnel-like, widening rim. Below the rim, the cup was decorated with a series of horizontal, punctations, beneath which was an engraved, horizontal, zigzag line (T. III/7–8). We also discovered several handle-like handles of cups, some of which had grooves on them (T. III/9–11). Besides ceramics, the finds also included several small pieces of animal bones.

Two more arrowheads with two perforations originated from these constructions and an iron arc-shaped knife, with the spine (T. V/2–3, 11).20

Around the outer ring of construction 10, we dug a control trench, 0.5 m in width and 3.7 m in length (Fig. 9). At a depth of 0.1 m, we found a layer of hard, beaten earth, mixed with small stones (a walking-path), just as we had in the previous constructions. The trench made it possible to see clearly that this layer did not exist around the entire construction but only in certain sections, particularly in the south-eastern and north-western parts. Apart from a small iron nail, this layer did not contain any other finds (Fig. 10; T. V/14).

The outer ring of construction 12, formed of natural rock and several rows of large or small broken stones, ranging in height from 0.2 to 0.7 m, was preserved in the southern part, while in the northern section it had been demolished (Fig. 11). The size of this construction along the NS axis was 6.3 m, and along the EW axis 6.8 m. We noticed certain differences in the formation of this construction. Namely, apart from the peripheral parts of the internal

17 In the area between the construction and the stone wall, we came across several fragments of incrusted ceramics, belonging to the Žuto Brdo–Gîrla Mare type.
18 Compared to the situation in 2006, we recorded the partial damage of several more constructions (2, 4, 5 and 6), as well as a large number of pits dug between them.
19 While talking to the local residents, we found out that besides metal objects, these treasure-hunters had started to carry off ceramic material, as well. Apart from several metal items, which we confiscated from them, we were unable to come by the ceramic material because it had most probably been thrown away.
20 It is interesting to note that these local treasure-hunters made a list of what they had dug up, and the locations. We confiscated these items from them and put them together with the finds from this construction, but we did not enter them in the plan of its foundation, for understandable reasons.
21 This damage was registered in 2006.
space of the construction, the levelling layer (earth and crushed stone) of which ranged from 0.2 to 0.4 m, most of it was under large blocks of natural rock and the fissures and cascades between the rocks, descending from east to west, were filled with soil and then covered with gravel. This levelling layer did not exceed a thickness of 0.15 m. In the western part of the construction, we discovered several fragments of the same biconical vessel, with a funnel-like, curving neck and a smooth rim, and unprofiled flat bottom (T. IV/7‡9). The vessel had polished surfaces, it was made of clay with additions of finely crushed stone, well-baked, and grey in colour. Several fragments of larger pots were discovered, which had a smooth rim, beneath which the shoulder was decorated with a series of horizontally imprinted finger tips. This series of imprints was interrupted by a horizontally positioned linguiform handle, also bearing the imprinted finger tip ornament (T. IV/3‡4). Apart from crudely made pottery, several fragments of a finer quality were found, with well-baked, polished surfaces. They belonged to

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**Fig. 10** Base of construction 10 after excavations, with finds

**Fig. 11** Appearance of construction 12 before excavations, from the northwest

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Legend:
- Arrowhead
- Iron pin
- Iron plating
- Iron nail
- Pottery
- Natural rock
- Earth base
larger vessels decorated with two parallel rows of punctations forming a zigzag motive, or a horizontal series of finger tip imprints on the section from the neck to the shoulder of the vessel (T. IV/5–6). Apart from ceramics, in this section, we came across a dark blue bead of glass paste with eyes and a human tooth, which we established had belonged to a young female person.

Fig. 12 Appearance of construction 12 after excavations, from the northeast

Сл. 12 Изглед консјрукције 12 након ископавања, са североистока

Fig. 13 Base of construction 12 after excavations, with finds

Сл. 13 Основа консјрукције 12 након ископавања са налађима
In the eastern, damaged section, nearer the centre of the construction, there was a larger quantity of crushed fragments of pottery.\textsuperscript{22} We found several fragments of different vessels in the fissures of the rocks – pots, cups and bowls (T. IV/1–2). Approximately, in the centre of the construction, there were several fragments of the same vessel, a conical bowl with the rim curving inwards, and a ring-like profiled bottom (T. IV/10). Besides ceramics, there were also several yellow or blue glass paste beads. Notably, there was a bead that was smaller in size, with protruding dark blue eyes framed in white, and what appeared probably to

\textsuperscript{22} Fresh breakages are visible on most of these fragments, caused by the unauthorised diggers, and it is possible that some of the ceramic material was also looted.
be a dark blue, double bead (traces of the other part of the bead were visible) without eyes. Moreover, in this part too, we found one more human tooth that had also belonged to a female person, whereas there were no metal finds or animal bones (Fig. 12–13).

We were able to distinguish the so-called walking path around construction 12, at the intersection of the southwest to the northwest side. Here, an iron iron was discovered, most probably part of a fibula (T. V/13).

An arrowhead with two perforations originated from this construction (T. V/4) and an iron belt-lock, made of thin sheet iron, the central, reinforced part of which was decorated with a series of horizontal, engraved lines (T. V/10).23

Construction 10a was situated two meters northeast of construction 10. This construction was not noticed in earlier research because it differed from the others. Namely, unlike most of the others, this construction had no outer ring, and it was formed between the natural rocks. Most of the interior of this construction was under large blocks of rock, and only a small space was strewn with earth and small, crushed stones. It appears that two units, which were separated by natural rock, were formed inside this construction (Fig. 14).

In our research, we divided it into the western, larger, and the eastern, smaller half. We established the dimensions of the construction to be 5.8 × 7.3 m. Although there were small holes in the southwestern part, it had not been devastated. The western part of the construction was full of archaeological material either left in the fissures of the rocks or arranged with the stones used to level out the construction. Among the more crudely made pottery, we distinguished fragments of large pots with a smooth rim, the shoulders of which were decorated with a series of diagonal finger tip imprints. On each side of the broadest section of the belly, there were horizontal tongue-like handles. The bottom of the vessel was flat, the surfaces were polished, and it was well-baked and brownish-red in colour (T. VI/13).

The western part of the construction was found to contain several metal objects. There was an iron, triangular arrowhead, with elongated edges of the arrow blades, with two perforations in the upper part (T. V/5). We then discovered an intact, iron knife with a gently curved blade (T. V/12), and not far from it was a piece of iron plating, probably the handle of the knife (T. V/9). Below the hole in the southwestern part, at a depth of 0.2 m, when emptying the space in the fissure of the rock, we found a gold link – an earring, with a circular cross section and open ends (T. V/15; Fig. 15).

In this section, we came across some 15 beads of glass paste (yellow and dark blue with two pairs of eyes), of different shapes and dimensions, among which we distinguished a small double bead (T. V/16).

In the eastern part of the construction, the situation was identical to that in the western part. In the fissures of rock, we collected several fragments of shallow or

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22 Fresh breakages are visible on most of these fragments, caused by the unauthorised diggers, and it is possible that some of the ceramic material was also footed.

23 These items, too, were confiscated from the treasure-hunters.

24 Tacnh 1983, 133, Fig. 84/14.
deep conical bowls, with twisted or faceted rims, curving inwards (T. VI/7–8), some specimens of which had a tongue-shaped handle on the shoulder (T. VI/9). Also featured were a certain number of fragments of conically-shaped cups, made of poorly sifted clay (T. VI/2), while there was a prevalence of pieces of crudely made pots, some of which were decorated with fingertip imprints. We also found pieces of a biconically-shaped amphora, with vertical applications on each of the shoulders, and large horizontally positioned linguiform handles on the belly (T. VI/12). The bottom of the amphora was flat,
with polished surfaces; it was poorly baked, and brownish-grey in colour. We singled out a small cup with two handles elevated above the rim, linking it on each side to the shoulders. The rim was accentuated by a horizontal rib, beneath which was a horizontal series of punctated circles (T. VI/11). The vessel was made of poorly sifted clay, poorly baked and its colour was dark brown.

In this section we found four beads of glass paste (three blue, and a yellow one, with two pairs of eyes), as well as several pieces of carbonised, fragmented animal bones. Of the metal finds, we discovered two arrowheads, identical to the other specimens (Fig. 15; T. V/6–7).

After construction 10a was emptied (Fig. 16), the surrounding area was cleared in a width of two meters. Like in the previous constructions, we established the existence of a means of access (walking path) that was identically formed, and situated in the north-western and south-eastern part.

On the plateau about 70 m away from the first constructions (31) on Mihajlov ponor, we also opened a test-pit of a size of $4 \times 2.5$ m. The cultural layer was at a relative depth of $0.2 – 0.25$ m to $0.45$ m. Other than several fragments of pottery from the Early Iron Age, which was unearthed in the first two excavation layers, the remaining material belonged to the horizon of incrusted Zuto Brdo pottery. The ornamented ceramics were made of clay and were well baked. Besides pieces of biconical bowls with gently widening rims and teat-like protrusions on the shoulders (T. VII/4), most of the fragments were from cups. These were small, biconically shaped vessels with handles that were slightly raised above the level of their rims (T. VII/5–8). The ornamental motives consisted of parallel sheaves of lines or punctations, zigzag lines, concentric circles, garlands, etc. (T. VII/7–11). The ornament was filled with a white colour. We singled out the fragment of a cup decorated with a symbol of the sun (T. VII/12), like the specimens from Zbrdile near Korbova,25 and similar to the cups from the Govora – Sat hoard.26 In addition, we discovered part of a torso and waist of an anthropomorphic figurine, ornamented with concentric circles and series of parallel lines incrusted with a white colour (T. VII/13). Apart from decorated, there was a considerable quantity of undecorated pottery. It mainly consisted of fragments of larger ceramic vessels, possibly hearth vessels for cooking, made of poor quality clay and badly baked (T. VII/1), as well as pieces of crudely made pots with big tunnel-like, hollow handles (T. VII/2–3). Besides the ceramics, we found a small bead of light blue glass paste with one eye (Fig. 17) and a fragmented stone axe, with a circular hole for the handle (T. VII/14).

Fig. 16 Appearance of construction 10a after excavations, from the northwest

Сл. 16 Илл. концікування 10а након іскопівавання, са северозапаоа

Fig. 17 Test-pit, ceramics in situ

Сл. 17 Пробна сондà, керамика in situ

25 Бабовић 1984, 68, fig. 72/67.
26 Morintz 1978, 68, fig. 40–41; Тасић 1997, 84, fig. 21.
Furthermore, metal detection was carried out over the broader surface of this plateau and on that occasion, we discovered an iron spear and a fibula (T. VIII/10–11), part of a sickle and several specimens of ancient bronze money.

Apart from the excavations, reconnaissance was also performed over the broader area of Mount Miroč. On the local road between Miroč and Petrovo selo, in a place called Dobre vode, exactly 5,200 m northwest of Mihajlov ponor, we discovered two more stone constructions (Fig. 1). The larger construction, which had a diameter of 12 m, was undamaged, except for a small hole in the middle, while the smaller construction, of a diameter of 8 m, was completely dug up in its central and eastern sections. Both constructions had an outer ring consisting of a series of broken stones. As opposed to the constructions on Mihajlov ponor that were erected on rock, these were formed on soil but the levelling layer was identical, that is, one could clearly see the system of arranging the broken stones, the movable archaeological material and the earth (Fig. 18). Around the outer ring of the construction that had been harrowed, in the southeastern and southwestern sections, we found a layer of beaten earth mixed with broken stones (a so-called walking path). From this construction, we collected several pottery fragments that were identical to those from Mihajlov ponor. Besides pieces of crudely made, large vessels, some of which were decorated with moulded bands with fingertip imprints, we found several pieces of more finely made pottery, parts of bowls and especially cups, and their ornaments consisted of linear engravings or punctations. We found part of the iron plating from the handle of a knife, and a fragmented iron belt-lock and a fragmented arrowhead with two perforations. From local treasure-hunters, we retrieved three more metal objects clearly shows that the stone constructions on Mihajlov ponor can reliably be attributed to the late phase of the Early Iron Age. Evidence of this is seen in the large number of arrowheads made of thin, sheet metal, with two or more perforations, reliably dated to the VI century BC, which were discovered in several places in eastern Serbia.34 Next, unilateral spring bow fibulae with a rectangular beaten foot (Marvinci–Gogošu type) were found in the Novi Pazar–Atenica horizon, that is, they belong to the end of the VI and the first decades of the V century BC.35 The closest analogy to the fibula from Mihajlov ponor originated from the localities dating from the end of the Early Iron Age in Oltenia–Gogošu, Ostrovul Mare, and

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28 Jovanović 1972, 12.
29 Bacň 1997, 95.
30 Bacň 1990, 63; Jevtić 2004, 150, fig. 84; Peković, Jevtić 2007, 131, fig. 4/7.
31 Stojić 1986, 18, T. 25; Cvijanović 1990, 180, fig. 121.
32 Vasić 1987, 667.
34 A large number of similar arrowheads were discovered at the Kornjet locality in the village of Podgorac, near Boljevac. Vulpe 1967, 66, fig. 21, 199-208; Vasić 2004, 16; Stojić 2006, 78, fig. 6-7; Peković 2006, 34, fig. 2-5; Peković, Jevtić 2007, 133, fig. 3/1-4, Pic. 6/1-3.
then in Pomoravlje–Umčari, as well as in the lower course of the River Mlava–Drmno and Kostolac. A fibula, with an identical profiliation to this one from Mihajlov ponor, was found in tumulus 4 of the necropolis with cremations in Ieșelnita, which was dated to the second half of the VI century BC. This type of unilateral spring fibula is also unique to the post-Basarabi horizon, that is, to the late Zlot–Sofronievo group in northwestern Bulgaria.

Poitrels with endings in the form of a gryphon or a horse’s head belong to the Szentes-Vekerzug type, i.e. the Scythian horizon of western Romania, as confirmed by the finds in the necropolis of Curtea de Argeș. Analogies are also evident in the poitrels from NagyTarcs in Hungary, which date from the second half of the VI century B.C. The iron knives with blades curved in the shape of an arc and the rectangular iron belt-locks are identical to the specimens from the Zlotska Cave. Characteristic of the late Basarabi culture is the upper part of a bronze, coil-shaped pendent (from a horse’s harness), of the Ghidici type.

After reconnoitring the terrain of the broader hinterland of Đerdap in 2004, when the Mihajlov ponor locality was discovered, we considered that this referred to a devastated Early Iron Age necropolis with tumuli like those found downstream from Kladovo,MIHAJLOV PONOR ON MIROĆ – TRIBAL CULT PLACES 207

Fig. 18 Dobre vode, detail of the excavated construction
Sl. 18 Добре воде, детайл раскопаної конструкції

37 Гума 1993, 237-239.
41 Николов 1965, 164, Abb. 1б-1; Јевтић 2004, 143, Pic. 79; Пековић 2006, 35; Пековић, Јевтић 2007, 129, fig. 3/15; 134, fig. 6/10.
42 Килиан 1975, 133, Т. 91; Килиан-Дирлmeier 1984, 6-10; Таош 1983, 115, fig. 75-b; Јевтић 1994, 77-85, fig. 7-10; Јевтић 2004, 138, fig. 74;
in the Vajuga–Pesak necropolis, or in Oltenia and the Rumanian part of Đerdap. However, after the research conducted in the period 2005–2007, we are inclined to believe that these constructions were special cult places (where certain cult rituals were performed) or kinds of forest shrines on Mount Miroč. In the last few years, the idea of the existence of sacred forests is particularly frequent in Bulgaria, where they are identified as locations where the northern Thracians erected their shrines. Apart from that, the circular stone constructions like these on Miroč, which are linked to the hallowed places of a cult, have been discovered in Sboryanovo in northeastern Bulgaria.

The constructions at Mihajlov ponor, and located in other spots on Mount Miroč, belong to the period from the end of the VI century BC, and from the territorial and cultural aspect, we can certainly identify the Tribali as the ethnic occupants of this complex of structures, who inhabited the region from the Morava to the Iskera at that time. The large number of locations where they were registered, in other words, the widespread territorial distribution of these constructions suggests the long duration of this religious phenomenon, leading to their typological homogeneity and, at the same time, to the assumption that they may have served as votive altars, which were distinct from the funeral rite. Even though a more complete votive inventory is missing, which makes it difficult for us to draw any substantial conclusions, we nevertheless recognise the heterogeneity of the finds from the constructions, and the different chronological periods and cultures they belonged to.

Furthermore, one can perceive a certain link between these constructions and the settlements, dating from the Late Bronze Age, registered in their immediate neighbourhood.

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46 Stoyanov et al. 2006, 48-49, fig. 70-71.
47 Papazoglu 1969, 413-419; Vukmanović 1990, 49; Stojan 1990, 38; Vasić 1997, 91-100; Jevtić 2004, 156; Peković, Jevtić 2007, 140.
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Lokalitet Mihajlov ponor na Miroču otkriven je krajem 2004. godine, tokom detaljnog arheološkog re-
cogniziraњa ширег zaleда Ђердана. Nalazi se на приблиžno 13 km североисточно од села Miroć, у подnожју brда Konска и Visоки Чукар са једне и Чока Геркула у са друге стране, на мањем узвишењу које је окружено вртама, и захвата површину од прибли
зно једног хектара. Na том простору регистровано је преко тридесет камених конструкција. Периферни пр-
стени састављени су од природних стена и ломљеног камена, а унутар њега је мањи прстен формиран од синије камене масе. Простор између њих засут је ситним комадима ломљеног камена и земљом. Један прстен је формиран од существено мањих мањих комадима камена и земље. Пречник тих камених конструкција креће се од 4 m до 12 m, док висина варира од 0,5 m до 1,3 m.

У два мања кампанања, током 2005-2006. године, истражене су две конструкције (7 и 9) као и сукоб зид који се налази приближно 400 m југозападно од Mihajlovog ponora. У кампанији 2007. године истражене су још три конструкције (10, 10a и 12; sl. 2), a у потрази за њиховим градитељима, на платоу око 70 m од првих кон-
струкција (31) на Mihajlovom ponoru, отворена је и мања пробна сонда.

Керамички налази са Mihajlovog ponora, прику-
pљени у овим истраживањима, указују на везе са Ол-
tенском и групом Фервије, односно припадају пост-
Басараби хоризонту. Овакав керамички материјал откривен је на више локалитета у североисточној Ср-
бији, а аналогије налазимо и у керамичком материја-
лу позног халштата у Поморављу, јужној Србији и на
Косову.

Велики број металних предмет откривених на Mi-
hajlovom ponoru указују да се ово налазиште може опредељити у млађу фазу старог возвена доба. Na то унућиву врхови стрела од танког возвена лицима, поуздано датованови у VI век п.н.е., потом једнопетла
стие лукове из фибуле са правоугаоњным ножем (тип Marvin-
ci – Gogoshe) датованови у другу половину VI века п.н.е. Такође и псалите са вртама је облика грабона или главе конца описана у типу Szent-Vekerzug, т.е. скитс-
ких хоризон западне Руманије (друга половина VI ве-
ка), а то датоване потврђује и горњи део куластог првог века од бронзе, типа Ghibici, a који је карактери-
стичан позноги Басараби културу.

Камене конструкције са Mihajlovog ponora сигурују припадају периоду одкраја VI века п.н.е. и могу се приписати Трибалима, који су у то време живели на простору од Мораве до Искера. Велики број локација на којима су они констата-
оване (Плоче, Добре воде, Бељански пут) иде у прилог претпоставци да смо на трагу Трибалских култних мес-
та, односно својеврсних шумских светилишта на пла-
нини Мироч. Последњих година ова теза о постојању
светних шума најчешће је присутна у Бугарској, где се оне идентификују као локације где су Северни Трачи
подизали своја култна места.

Током ових истраживања дошли смо и до за-
кључка да, највероватније постоји извесна веза изме-
ђу ових конструкција и насеља из касног бронзаног
добра, а која су евидентирана у њиховој непосредној
близини.
Plate I. Artifacts from constructions: VII – 1–8, 12–13; I – 9–10, 15; X – 11, 14; XI – 16.

Plate II. Ceramics from construction VII

Табла II: Керамика из конструкције VII

Plate III. Ceramics from construction X

Табла III: Керамика из конструкуция X
Plate IV. Ceramics from construction XII

Табла IV: Керамика из конструкције XII
Plate V. Metal artifacts from constructions X, XII and X α

Табла V. Метали предмети из конструкуции: X, XII и X α
Plate VI. Ceramics from construction X a
Табла VI. Керамика из консрукции X a

Plate VII. Ceramics from test-pit

Tabla VII. Керамика из јромне сонде
Plate VIII. Metal artefacts: Dobre vode 1–9; Mihajlov ponor plateau 10–11.

Таблица VIII. Метални предмети: Добре воде 1-9; Михаилов йонор 10-11.