

VELIKA MRDAKOVICA

REZULTATI NAJNOVIJIH ARHEOLOŠKIH
ISTRAŽIVANJA (2011. – 2013.)



RESULTS OF THE LATEST
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH (2011 - 2013)



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Poštovani posjetitelju,

Prije nekoliko su godina, nakon skoro četrdesetogodišnje stanke, ponovno započela istraživanja na nekropoli Velike Mrdakovice. U tri kampanje koje su provodili arheolozi pod vodstvom višeg kustosa Tonija Brajkovića iz Muzeja grada Šibenika, a koje su zajednički financirali Grad Vodice i Šibensko-kninska županija, istraženo je petnaest novih grobova i pronađeni mnogi vrijedni artefakti, od kojih nekoliko raritetnih i stoga višestruko značajnih za spoznavanje veličine i važnosti liburnsko-rimskog naselja na tjemenu Velike Mrdakovice.

Želja autora, Tonija Brajkovića iz Muzeja grada Šibenika i organizatora, Pučkog otvorenog učilišta Vodice, bila je da Vas kroz našu izložbu upoznamo s vrijednostima i ljepotom istraženog arheološkog materijala. Odabranim smo izlošcima nastojali ispričati priču o životu na ovom prostoru koji je trajao u kontinuitetu od 4. stoljeća prije Krista do 3. stoljeća poslije Krista. Iako nas je ograničenost izložbenog prostora prisilila da izložimo samo neke artefakte, oni rječito i jasno govore o ljudima i načinu života na Velikoj Mrdakovici tijekom tog razdoblja, a cjelokupno baštinjeno bogatstvo s Velike Mrdakovice, uz arheološke nalaze s drugih lokaliteta u zaleđu Vodica, činit će dio stalnog postava buduće vodičke muzejske ustanove.

Gordana Birin, prof.
ravnateljica Pučkog otvorenog učilišta Vodice

Dear visitor,

The research on the necropolis of Velika Mrdakovica was resumed a few years ago, after almost forty years. In three campaigns, which were carried out by archaeologists under leadership of senior curator Toni Brajković from Šibenik City Museum and which were jointly funded by the Town of Vodice and the Šibenik- Knin County, fifteen new graves were explored and many valuable artefacts were found; some of them are very rare and therefore in many ways important for understanding the size and the importance of the Liburnian - Roman settlement on the crest of Velika Mrdakovica.

The intention of the author, Toni Brajković from the Šibenik City Museum and the organizer, the Public Open University Vodice, is to introduce the values and the beauty of the excavated archaeological material through this exhibition. With the selected exhibits, we sought to tell the story of life in this area, which lasted continuously from the 4th century BC to the 3rd century AD. Although the limitations of our exhibition space forced us to expose only some of the artefacts, they clearly speak about the people and the way of life on Velika Mrdakovica during this period, while the whole wealth inherited from Velika Mrdakovica, along with the archaeological findings from other sites of the Vodice hinterland, will be a part of the permanent exhibition of the future Vodice museum.

Gordana Birin, prof.
principal of the Public Open University Vodice



... o položaju Arauzone, koja se zasigurno nalazila u donjem toku rijeke Krke, u antičko doba nazivane Titius, možemo u nedostatku sigurnog nalaza (natpisa s imenom grada), govoriti tek u terminima velike vjerojatnosti. Tu se s obzirom na količinu i raznovrsnost domaćeg i importiranog materijala u domaćoj i stranoj znanstvenoj literaturi kao najvjerojatnije ili skoro sigurno mjesto tog liburnskog i rimskog grada izdvojila Velika Mrdakovica. Na njenom vrhu smješteno gradinsko naselje bilo je opasano dvostrukim kamenim utvrđenjem ...

... on the position of Arausona, which was certainly located in the lower course of the river Krka, called Titius in ancient times, due to lack of certain findings (inscription with the name of the town), we can only speak in terms of high probability. Considering the amount and variety of domestic and imported materials in local and foreign scientific literature, Velika Mrdakovica stands out as the most likely or almost certain location of that Liburnian and Roman town. The hill fort on its peak was surrounded by a double stone wall fortification ...



Liburnski i kasnije rimski grad Arauzonu spominje u svojim vrelima više antičkih autora. Prvi među njima – Klaudije Ptolemej, grčki matematičar, astronom i geograf rodom Egipćanin, u djelu Zemljopisni prikaz (*Γεωγραφικὴ ὑφήγησις* / *Geographica enarratio*) iz 2. stoljeća navodi Arauzonu (Ἀραύζωνα) pod kopnenim gradovima Liburnije kao jedno od osam tisuća urbanih cjelina Mediterana. I Anonimni Ravenjanin ju spominje (*Arausione*) u Kozmografiji (*Cosmographia*), periplusu nastalom tijekom 7. – 8. stoljeća, među obalnim gradovima istočnog Jadrana i Dalmacije. Antoninov itinerar iz 2. – 3. stoljeća, opisujući pokrajinske putove, smješta Arauzu (*Arausa*) udaljenu 46 tisuća koraka od Trogira, 30 tisuća koraka od zasad neubiciranog Pretorija i 20 tisuća od Blandone u blizini Stabnja, u zaleđu Vranskog jezera.

The Liburnian and later Roman town Arausona is mentioned in works of many ancient authors. First among them - Claudius Ptolemy, a Greek mathematician, astronomer, geographer and a native of Egypt, in his work named *Geography*, (*Γεωγραφικὴ ὑφήγησις* / *Geographica enarratio*) from the second century, mentions Arausona (Ἀραύζωνα) among the continental towns of Liburnia as one of eight thousand urban units of the Mediterranean. In *Cosmography* (*Cosmographia*), a periplus created during the 7th - 8th century, it is also mentioned among coastal towns of the eastern Adriatic and Dalmatia (*Arausione*) by Anonymous of Ravenna. Describing provincial roads, the Antonine Itinerary from the 2nd - 3rd century places Arauza (*Arausa*) 46 000 steps away from Trogir, 30 000 steps from the still not localised Praetorium and 20 000 steps from Blandona near Stabanj, in the hinterland of Lake Vrana.



Sl./Fig. 1

Svi pisci su svoje radove bazirali na ranijim, često neprovjerenim i različitim izvorima, pa podatke koje donose moramo uzeti sa zadržkom. Kad bismo pokušali na osnovu njih odrediti točan položaj Arauzone koja se na pojedinim kartama nalazi prilično daleko od Velike Mrdakovice ili gradine Dragišić, od pojedinih autora smatrane ravnopravnim takmacem arauzonskom naslijeđu, zapali bismo u velike probleme. (Sl. 1) Naizgled najpouzdanije smjernice, primjenjujući astronomska i matematička znanja na geografiju, donosi Ptolemej određujući točan položaj grada izražen u zemljopisnim dužinama i širinama – $\mu\beta'L'' \mu\delta'\gamma''$ ($42^{\circ}30' 44^{\circ}20'$). Ovaj sistem koji je preteča sadašnjeg koordinatnog sustava meridijana i paralela trebao bi stoga biti



Sl./Fig. 2

All authors based their work on earlier, often unverified and various sources, so the information they provide must be used with reservation. If we would attempt to pinpoint the exact location of Arausona based on these data, which on some maps is located quite far from Velika Mrdakovica or the hill fort Dragišić - considered an equal competitor of the Arausona heritage by individual authors - we would be in great problems. (Fig. 1) The seemingly most reliable guidelines are provided by Ptolemy, determining the exact position of the town in latitudes and longitudes - $\mu\beta'L'' \mu\delta'\gamma''$ ($42^{\circ}30' 44^{\circ}20'$) by applying astronomical and mathematical knowledge in geography. This system, which is the forerunner of the current coordinate system of meridians

precizan i ne ostavljati mjesta sumnji u određivanju bilo koje točke u prostoru. Međutim, Ptolemejeve originalne karte početkom srednjeg vijeka su izgubljene. Sačuvane su tek bizantske kopije u čijem je prijepisu također moglo doći do pogrešaka. No, ako bismo i računali s pretpostavkom da je sve dosljedno preneseno, ostaje problem apsolutnih repera na koje je polagana Ptolemejeva „mreža“ i izračunavanje prije svega geografske dužine – ona s obzirom na kompleksni zbroj udaljenosti pojedinih mjesta u unutrašnjosti, dakle van obale, ne bi bila do u tančine točna.

Zbog svega navedenog o položaju Arauzone, koja se zasigurno nalazila u donjem toku rijeke Krke, u antičko doba nazivane *Titius*, možemo u nedostatku sigurnog nalaza (natpisa s imenom grada), govoriti tek u terminima velike vjerojatnosti. Tu se s obzirom na količinu i raznovrsnost domaćeg i importiranog materijala u domaćoj i stranoj znanstvenoj literaturi kao najvjerojatnije ili skoro sigurno mjesto tog liburnskog i rimskog grada izdvojila Velika Mrdakovica (Sl. 2). Na njenom vrhu smješteno gradinsko naselje bilo je opasno dvostrukim kamenim utvrđenjem. Raniji pojas bedema od neobrađenih kamenova koji su činili vijenac oko gornje trećine brda predstavljao je prvu liniju obrane. Drugi, rađen od pravilnih tesanaca, zasad je ubiciran na zapadnoj strani, malo ispod tjemena gradine. On je, prateći prirodnu konfiguraciju terena, izrađen na mjestima gdje je to bilo nužno. U isto je vrijeme utvrđivao grad i određivao njegove gabarite. Velike količine tog kamena služile su generacijama težaka kao gotov građevni materijal za gradnju kuća, štala i suhozida. Sačuvao se tek manji dio zidina, veliki kameni blokovi ulaza u naselje i, naravno, ostaci arhitekture koji su vremenom dospjeli pod zemlju.

Preci sadašnjih vlasnika parcela, Vodičana i Zatonjana, poučeni iskustvom o brojnim ostacima nekadašnje starine te prežicima iskrivljene narodne predaje, prenosili su priče koje je zabilježio domaći učitelj Frane Škarpa i objavio ih u *Viestniku Hrvatskoga arheološkoga društva* 1888. godine. Škarpa među ostalim piše: „(...) Puk u Zatonu i Vodicah priča, da je Velika Mrdakovica bio velik' grad, a da se je zvao Bela.

and parallels, should therefore be accurate and leave no room for doubt when determining any point in space. However, Ptolemy's original maps were lost in the early Middle Ages. Only Byzantine copies, whose transcript might also contain errors, are preserved. However, even if we assume that everything was transferred consistently, we are left with the problem of absolute benchmarks, which were the basis for Ptolemy's "network", and primarily the calculation of the longitude - due to the complex sum of the distances of individual locations on the inside, i.e. outside the coast, would not be completely accurate.

Taking into account everything that was said on the position of Arausona, which was certainly located in the lower course of the river Krka, called *Titius* in ancient times, due to lack of certain findings (inscription with the name of the town), we can only speak in terms of high probability. Considering the amount and variety of domestic and imported materials in local and foreign scientific literature, Velika Mrdakovica (Fig. 2) stands out as the most likely or almost certain location of that Liburnian and Roman town. The hill fort on its peak was surrounded by a double stone wall fortification. The earlier line of walls made of raw stones, which formed a crest around the upper third of the hill, represented the first line of defence. The second, made of ashlar stone, has so far been located on the west side, just below the crown of the hill fort. Following the natural terrain configuration, it was made in places where this was necessary. It fortified the town and determined its size at the same time. Large quantities of that stone served generations of farmers as building material for houses, barns and dry stone walls. Only a small part of the walls is preserved, large stone blocks of the settlement entrance and, of course, the remains of architecture that got under ground in time.

The ancestors of the current owners of plots, residents of Vodice and Zaton, learning from the experience of many remnants of former antiquities and remains of distorted folklore, passed on stories which were recorded by the local teacher Frane Škarpa and published in *Viestnik Hrvatskoga Arheološkoga Društva* in 1888.

(...) Vodičani su njeke godine i kopali između zidova jedne kuće i našli su jedan zlatni prsten, koji se sada nalazi u Mate Srdarića. (...) Po cijeloj glavici nalaziš rimskih kupa, a narod, kao obično, priča, da je na jednom mjestu i blago zakopano.“

Do prve polovine 20. stoljeća još su južno od gradine bili posađeni vinogradi, zemlja se intenzivno obrađivala i često bi svijetlo dana ugledalo nešto što je stoljećima ostajalo skriveno od pogleda. Zabilježena su u Škarpinim izvješćima i imena nekih sretnika budući se „blago“ nalazilo na „krčevini Nikole Dukića, Nikole Čoge, Mije Ivande i Šime Mrse, Marka Cvitana a tud je sad loza zasadjena.“

Na tome bi sve i ostalo da nije neiscrpnim marom prema kulturnoj baštini svoga kraja Zatonjanin Mile Severdija, donoseći brojne ulomke keramike s Velike Mrdakovice, uvjerio arheologe Muzeja grada Šibenika kako se tu svakako isplati „početi kopati“.

Tijekom sustavnih arheoloških istraživanja (1969. – 1974.) pod vodstvom kustosa šibenskog muzeja Zdenka Brusića istražen je dio gradinskog naselja i nekropole s njegove južne strane. Otkriveno je oko 130, uglavnom rimskih – paljevinskih (1. – 2. st.), ali i prapovijesnih – inhumacijskih grobova (4. – 1. st. pr. Kr.) korištenih i u vremenu antike te kao kuriozitet jedan srednjovjekovni ukop. Respektabilan dio keramičkog materijala antičke provenijencije pripadao je uvozu iz italjskih radionica (Arezzo, Aquileia), posebno produkti tzv. tere sigilate (tanjuri, šalice, čaše, Sarius posude, pehari), ali i posude tankih stijenki. Prapovijesni helenistički grobovi, rađeni od pravilno tesanih kamenova u tehnici suhozida, sadržavali su reljefno ukrašene keramičke posude importirane iz grčkih kolonija na Jadranu, dok su oni iz najstarijeg horizonta ukopani duboko u zemlju, ograđeni priklesanom liticom uz lagani obzid, „čuvali“ skromnije priloge od bronce i jantara.

Škarpa writes among other things: „(...) The people in Zaton and Vodice say that Velika Mrdakovica was a big town and that it was called Bela. (...) A few years ago, the residents of Vodice were digging between the walls of a house and found a golden ring which is now held by Mate Srdarić. (...) All along the small hill, Roman roof tiles can be found and people say, as usual, that there was a treasure buried somewhere.“

Vineyards were grown and the land was intensively cultivated south of the hill fort until the first half of the 20th century and often “something” that was hidden for centuries would see the light of day. Škarpa’s reports also mention some of the lucky ones because the “treasure” was located on the plots of Nikola Dukić, Nikola Čoga, Mijo Ivanda and Šime Mrša, Marko Cvitan and now grape vine is cultivated there.

This would be the end of it, if there was not for the inexhaustible diligence of Mile Severdija from Zaton for the cultural heritage of his region, who brought numerous fragments of pottery from Velika Mrdakovica and convinced the archaeologists from the Šibenik City Museum that it is definitely worth to “start digging”.

During the systematic archaeological research (1969 - 1974) led by the curator of the museum of Šibenik Zdenko Brusić, a part of the hill fort settlement and the necropolis on its southern side was explored. Around 130, mostly Roman - cremation (1st – 2nd century), as well as prehistoric – inhumation graves (4th – 1st century BC) also used in ancient times, and as a curiosity, one medieval burial were discovered. A respectable part of the ceramic material of ancient provenance belonged to the import from Italic workshops (Arezzo, Aquileia), especially products called Terra sigillata (plates, cups, glasses, Sarius vessels, bowls) but also thin-walled vessels. Prehistoric Hellenistic graves, made of ashlar stones in the dry stone wall technique, contained moulded ceramic vessels imported from Greek colonies on the Adriatic, while those from the oldest horizon were buried deep in the ground, lightly walled by additionally processed cliff, containing modest contributions made of bronze and amber.

ARHEOLOŠKA KAMPANJA 2011. – NOVI NALAZI I RASPRAVA O POGREBU ARCHAEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN IN 2011 - NEW FINDINGS AND FUNERAL DISCUSSION

Nakon skoro četiri protekla desetljeća od zadnje arheološke kampanje započela je nova s ciljem utvrđivanja gabarita liburnsko-rimskog groblja, smjera njegova pružanja i otkrića svih postojećih ukopa.

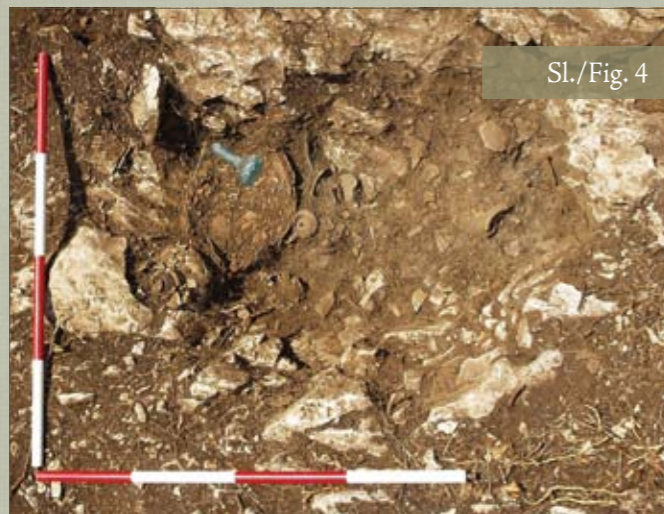
Vrijeme je učinilo svoje i nekad istraženi dio nekropole u cijelosti je prekrilo gmlje, korov i drveće koje je, kako smo kasnije ustanovili, svojim kapilarnim korijenjem napravilo veliku štetu inventaru rimskodobnih grobova smještenih na maloj dubini (15 – 30 cm). Na terenu je bila uočljiva tek kamena arhitektura helenističkih i duboke otvorene rake starijih prapovijesnih grobova uz velike nasipe zemlje izbačene tijekom ranijih istraživanja. Nakon čišćenja raslinja izvršeno je rekognosciranje, geodetsko snimanje nekropole i gradine te su određene pozicije za iskope prvih probnih sonde na perifernim točkama poznatog dijela nekropole. (Sl. 3)

Nearly four decades since the last archaeological campaign, a new one began, aiming to identify the dimensions of the Liburnian - Roman cemetery, its direction and to discover all existing burial places.

Time has done its part and the once explored part of the necropolis was entirely covered by bushes, weeds and trees, which, as we later discovered, caused serious damage with its capillary roots to the inventory of the Roman period graves located at shallow depth (15-30 cm). Only stone architecture of the Hellenistic graves and deep open pits of older prehistoric graves were visible along the large bulks of soil dug during earlier excavations. The removing of the plants was followed by reconnaissance, geodetic survey of the necropolis and the hill fort and positions for opening the first trial trenches on peripheral points of the known part of the necropolis were determined. (Fig. 3)



Sl./Fig. 3



Sl./Fig. 4

U prve dvije sonde (sonde 1 i 2) ukupne površine 40 m², pronađeni su tek rijetki ulomci keramičkih posuda nanesenih erozijom i obradom tla. Sonda 3 (75 m²) prislunjena uz jugoistočni segment otprije istražene površine (Brusićevi kvadranti 2 i 3) iznjedrila je pet rimskih grobova datiranih u vrijeme ranoga carstva. Svi su bili smješteni u usjeku litice, ponekad po potrebi priklesavane. Osim, uglavnom keramičkih, urni lokalne proizvodnje u koje su odlagani spaljeni ostaci pokojnika, uobičajene grobne priloge su sačinjavale metalne sponje za kopčanje odjeće – fibule, uljne svjetiljke – lucerne, predmeti od stakla te posude tankih stijenki kao produkti najfinijeg kuhinjskog posuđa te čavli (Sl. 4). Naime, po tada uvriježenim vjerovanjima čovjek se na onomu svijetu koristio stvarima koje je imao i za života pa je istovjetni materijal s mrdakovičke nekropole utvrđen i na gradinskom naselju. Tanjuri iz kojih su preminuli nekad jeli nerijetko su korišteni u svojstvu poklopaca urni, balzamariji namijenjeni držanju pomasti i pomada bacani su na lomaču ili direktno polagani u grob, a staklene ili keramičke čaše i boce iz kojih se svakodnevno pilo ostavljane su umrlome da se njima i dalje služi. Fibule su ostatak najbolje pokojnikove odjeće odabrane za posljednji ispraćaj, dok su lucerne trebale osvijetliti put u zagrobni život.

The first two trenches (trenches 1 and 2), with a total area of 40 m², contained only rare fragments of ceramic vessels drifted with erosion and tillage. Trench 3 (75 m²) placed along the south-eastern segment of the previously explored area (Brusić quadrants 2 and 3) brought five Roman graves from the early empire. They were all placed in the cliff notch and sometimes processed additionally. Beside mainly ceramic urns of local production, where incinerated remains of the deceased were deposited, common grave contributions consisted of metal brooches for the fastening of clothes – fibulae, oil lamps - lucernae, glassware and vessels with thin walls as products of the finest cookware, as well as nails (Fig. 4). In fact, according to beliefs which were then widespread, one used the things that were owned during the life in the afterlife as well, so material identical to the items found on the Mrdakovica necropolis was found on the hill fort settlement. Plates from which the deceased used to eat have frequently been used as urn lids. Balsamaria used for the keeping of ointments and salves were thrown on the pyre or directly placed in the grave and daily used glass or ceramic cups and bottles were left to the deceased for further use. Fibulae are the remains of the deceased's finest outfit selected for the funeral, while the lucernae should light the way to the afterlife.



Arheološka ekipa 2011 / Archaeological team 2011



GROB GRAVE NG1



- 1 Keramička amfora, kraj 1. – početak 2. stoljeća / Ceramic amphora, end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd century 2 Keramička lucerna radi-
onice FORTIS, kraj 1. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna of the FORTIS workshop, end of the 1st century 3 Staklena boca trbušastog tijela
(balzamarij?), 1. – 2. stoljeće / Glass bottle with a bellied body (balsamarium?), 1st – 2nd century 4 Keramički vrčić, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Ceramic
juglet, 1st – 2nd century 5 Keramički vrč (oinochoe), 1. stoljeće / Ceramic jug (oinochoe), 1st century 6 Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, oblik
dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic urn of local production, long continuity shape 7 Srebrna višestruko raščlanjena fibula, 1. stoljeće / Manifoldly
divided silver fibula, 1st century 8 Keramička zdjela, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Ceramic bowl, 1st – 2nd century 9 Posuda tankih stijenki, 1. polovina 1. –
1. pol. 2. stoljeća / Thin walled vessel, 1st half of the 1st – 1st half of the 2nd century

Ako bi umrlo dijete kao urna je upotrebljavana manja keramička zdjela s priložima adekvatnima njegoj dobi – kao u grobu NG 2 gdje su, među ostalim, nađeni malo ogledalo bez drške, koštana šivaća igla i preslica s pršljenom od zelene staklene paste te dva igraća žetona (crni i bijeli). (Sl. 5)

Odnosi između pripadnika različitih društvenih slojeva uočljivi su i u grobnom inventaru. Na status bogatijeg pojedinaca iz groba NG 3 (Sl. 6) ukazuju željezni prsten, dvije staklene, nažalost većim dijelom uništene, boce s pečatima sirijsko-palestinskih radionica (Sl. 7) te mnoštvo ostalog materijala od kojeg se ističu keramička

If the deceased was a child, a smaller ceramic bowl with contributions appropriate to its age was used as an urn – just as in grave NG 2, where, among other things, the following items were found: a small mirror without a handle, a sewing needle made of bone and a distaff with a twirl made of green glass paste, as well as two playing chips (black and white). (Fig. 5)

The relationships between members of different social classes are also visible in the grave inventory. A wealthier status of the individual from grave NG 3 (Fig. 6) is indicated by the iron ring, two unfortunately largely destroyed bottles made of glass with seals of Syrian



Sl./Fig. 5

GROB GRAVE NG3



1 Keramički lončić, 1. – 1. polovina 2. stoljeća / Ceramic small pot, 1st – first half of the 2nd century 2 Keramička šalica, 2. polovina 1. – 1. polovina 2. stoljeća / Ceramic cup, second half of the 1st – first half of the 2nd century 3 Keramička lucerna trokutasto završenog nosa s volutama, kraj 1. - 1. polovina 2. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna with trigonous ended nose and volutes, end of the 1st – first half of the 2nd century 4 Željezni prsten, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Iron ring, 1st – 2nd century 5 Stakleni vrčići, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Glass juglets, 1st – 2nd century 6 Posuda tankih stijenki, sredina 1. stoljeća / Thin walled vessel, middle of the 1st century 7 Keramička posuda, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Ceramic vessel, 1st – 2nd century 8 Keramički tanjur, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Ceramic plate, 1st – 2nd century 9 Keramička šalica, 2. polovina 1. – 1. polovina 2. stoljeća / Ceramic cup, second half of the 1st – first half of the 2nd century 10 Keramički tanjur, 1. stoljeće / Ceramic plate, 1st century



Sl./Fig. 6

Lucerna s prikazom tronožne poklopljene ciste te manja keramička posuda s grafitom na dnu. Sačuvana su tri latinična slova. Sigurno je urezano AN, no posljednje, nevjesto oblikovano, može biti C, S ili I. Na primjeru groba NG 4 s izuzetno bogatim priložima svu vještinu su pokazali konzervatori uspješni, „spasiti“ sav, uglavnom dobro uništen, posthumni inventar. (Sl. 8)

U sloju zemlje kojom su prekrivane rake primijećeni su, osim ostataka raznovrsnog grobnog materijala, i komadi izgorjenih kamenova. Spaljivanje se moglo obavljati na za to utvrđenom i ograđenom mjestu (*Ustrinum*) ili pored samoga groba (*Bustum*). Dosad nije zasigurno utvrđena takva lokacija iako postoje indicije da se bar jedan dio rituala, banket, spaljivanje ili nešto treće, odigravao na sjeveroistočnom rubu nekropole o čemu će više riječi biti u nastavku teksta.

- Palestinian workshops (Fig. 7) and many other materials, of which the ceramic lucerna with a depiction of the three-legged covered ash chest and a small ceramic vessel with graphite at the bottom stand out. Three Latin letters are preserved. AN is certainly incised, but the last, clumsily shaped letter, may be a C, an S or an I. Conservators showed their skill on NG 4, a grave with extremely rich contributions, and managed to “save” the entire, largely destroyed, posthumous inventory. (Fig. 8)

Except for the remains of various grave materials, the layer of earth that was used to cover the pits also contained pieces of burnt stones. Incineration could be performed on a place set and fenced for this purpose (*Ustrinum*) or next to the grave itself (*Bustum*). So far, the site has not been definitely established, although there are indications that at least one part of the ritual, banquet, incineration or something else, took place on the north-western edge of the necropolis, which will be discussed later.

Except based on the material heritage of Liburnians, the details and customs of their everyday life are not known to us from the pen of ancient writers, other than the quotes from *Periplus maris ad litora habitata Europae et Asiae et Lybiae* (Sailing along the crowded



Sl./Fig. 7

GROB GRAVE NG4



- 1 Keramička lucerna trokutasto završenog nosa s volutama, sredina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna with trigonous ended nose and volutes, middle of the 1st century 2 Staklena boca trbušastog tijela (balzamarij?), 1. – 2. stoljeće / Glass bottle with a bellied body (*balsamarij?*), 1st – 2nd century 3 Keramički tanjur, 1. stoljeće / Ceramic plate, 1st century 4 Keramička posuda, 1. stoljeće / Ceramic vessel, 1st century 5 Keramički tanjur, 1. stoljeće / Ceramic plate, 1st century 6 Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, oblik dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic urn of local production, long continuity shape 7 Brončana fibula tipa *aucissa*, 1. stoljeće / Bronze fibula of the *Aucissa* type, 1st century 8 Keramički bokal, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Ceramic ewer, 1st – 2nd century



Sl./Fig. 8

coasts of Europe, Asia and Libya), written in the 4th century BC, where Pseudo-Scylax writes „(...) They are ruled by women, and those women are free from husbands and mingle with their slaves and men from the neighbourhood. (...)“ Therefore, information on the cult of the dead are also missing, so we can only reconstruct events based on the excavated grave units. Many different nails and rivets found in each unit undoubtedly indicate that the deceased was carried to the pyre on more simple or more luxurious wooden crates or biers, depending on the age and importance of the individual.

According to Roman burial customs, this was done by slaves or relatives. Sons wearing veils and daughters with dishevelled hair walk in the procession behind the body, followed by the rest of the crowd, in which the wailers with their theatrical battering of the chest and scratching of the cheeks especially stand out. Having arrived at the square shaped pyre, often covered with dark leaves and surrounded by cypress branches, the closest relatives set it on fire with their faces turned back. The name of the deceased is loudly invoked three times and the things loved by the deceased are thrown into the open flame. Then wine is pored over the burnt remains and ember, bones are collected, sprinkled with perfume and placed in an urn. With a magic formula *Ira Licet*, spoken by the responsible person, the mourners

Osim na temelju materijalne ostavštine Liburna nisu nam poznati detalji i običaji njihovog svakodnevnog života iz pera antičkih pisaca osim navoda iz djela *Periplus maris ad litora habitata Europae et Asiae et Lybiae* (Oplovba uz napučene obale Europe, Azije i Libije), napisanog u 4. stoljeću prije Krista, u kojem Pseudo-Skilak piše „(...) Njima vladaju žene, a te su žene slobodne od muževa i miješaju se sa svojim robovima i muškarcima iz susjedstva. (...)“ Shodno tome nedostaju i podaci o kultu mrtvih pa nam preostaje tek rekonstrukcija događaja na osnovu istraženih grobnih cjelina. Mnoštvo različitih čavala i zakovica zatečenih u svakoj od njih nesumnjivo ukazuje da se pokojnik do lomače nosio na jednostavnijim ili raskošnijim drvenim odrima ili sanducima, ovisno već o dobi i značaju pojedinca.



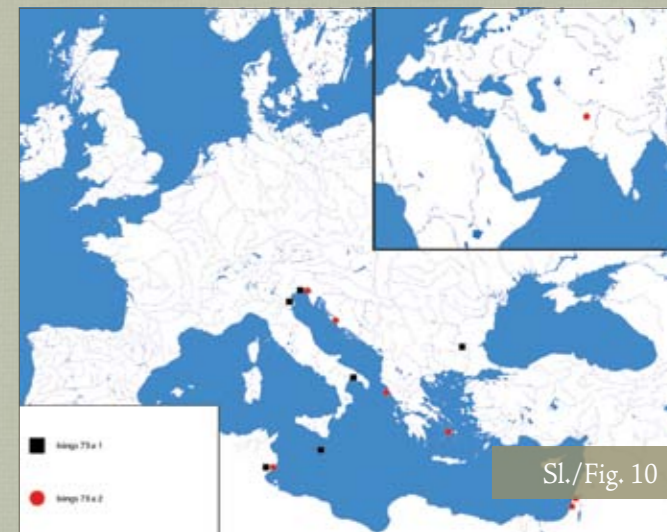
Sl./Fig. 9

Po rimskim pogrebnim običajima to su činili robovi ili rodbina. U povorci prvi iza tijela idu sinovi koprenom zastrih glava, kćeri raščupanih kosa te ostatak mnoštva u kojem se posebno ističu narikače s teatralnim udaranjem o prsa i grebanjem obraza. Došavši kod kvadratno izrađene lomače, često prekrivene tamnim lišćem i okružene granama čempresa, najbliža rodbina je pali okrenutih lica. Tri puta glasno se zaziva pokojnikovo ime i na otvoreni plamen bacaju stvari koje je preminuli volio. Izgoreni ostaci i žar potom se polijevaju vinom, kosti skupljaju, poškrope parfemom i stavljaju u urnu te magičnom formulom *Ira Licet*, izgovorene od strane odgovorne osobe, otpuste ožalošćeni.

Naravno, liburnsko stanovništvo je u klimi rimske snošljivosti prema različitim narodima i običajima nesumnjivo zadržalo osobitosti unutar krutih i teško promjenjivih vjerskih tradicija, ali su duga stoljeća bliskih veza i suživota s prekomorskim susjedom, osobito u vrijeme izrazite romanizacije tijekom 1. i 2. stoljeća, ostavila dubok trag i u kultu mrtvih.

Inventar mrdakovičkih grobova pruža nam neposredan uvid u povezanost tadašnjeg grada s tokovima modernih zbivanja ondašnjeg svijeta. Neki uvezeni predmeti poput staklenog pužolikog ritona iz groba NG 5 (Sl. 9) pripadaju rijetko viđenim dovezima staklarske produkcije. Ritoni – posude oblika roga – sadrže naglašeno simboličko i kulturno značenje. Koriste se unutar protokola i rituala, iz njih se pije na simpozijima i banketima, a namijenjeni su isključivo pojedincima više društvene klase i veće platežne moći. Riton s mrdakovičke nekropole izuzetno je rijedak – jedini tog tipa otkriven u Hrvatskoj i jedan od 18 pronađenih u svijetu. (Sl. 10, 11) Nalazio se u većoj keramičkoj urni lokalne proizvodnje zajedno s čašom crvenog premaza, šalicom pjeskarene površine s metličastim ornamentom, cjevastim balzamarijem i lucernom trokutasto završenog nosa s volutama. Uz urnu poklopljenu kamenom pločom te okruženu nizom kamenova unutar djelomično priklesane litice priložen je i keramički vrč s ručkom. (Sl. 12)

Pokraj groba su evidentirani željezni čavli i namjerno



Sl./Fig. 10

are released.

Of course, in Roman climate of tolerance towards different peoples and customs, the Liburnian population undoubtedly kept their characteristics within the rigid and hard changing religious traditions, but long centuries of close ties and co-existence with the overseas neighbour, especially in a time of extreme Romanization during the 1st and 2nd century, left a deep mark in the cult of the dead.

The inventory of Mrdakovica graves gives us a direct insight into the relationship of the town with the flow of modern developments of the world. Some imported items, such as the snail-like rhyton made of glass from grave NG 5 (Fig. 9), belong to the rarely seen accomplishments in glass production. Rhytons – horn-shaped vessels - have emphasized symbolic and iconic significance. They are used in protocols and rituals, for drinking at symposiums and banquets, and are exclusively intended for individuals of higher social class and greater spending power. The rhyton from the Mrdakovica necropolis is extremely rare – it is the only rhyton of this type discovered in Croatia and one of 18 found in the world. (Fig. 10,11) It was in a bigger ceramic urn of local production together with a red painted glass, a cup with blasted surface with panicle ornament, tubular balsamarium and a lucerna finished with a triangular



Sl./Fig. 12

razbijeni ostaci još jednog keramičkog vrča pod kojim je uočen veći metalni, vjerojatno recentni, predmet.

nose with volutes. A ceramic jug with a handle is placed beside the urn covered with a stone slab and surrounded by a series of stones inside a partly processed cliff. (Fig. 12) Next to the grave iron nails and deliberately smashed remains of another ceramic jug are recorded - it was located over a larger one, made of metal, probably a recent item.



Sl./Fig. 11



GROB GRAVE NG5



- 1 Posuda tipa *Sarius*, prva polovina 1. stoljeća / Vessel of the *Sarius* type, first half of the 1st century
 2 Stakleni pužoliki riton, 2. polovina 1. stoljeća / Glass snail-like rhyton, 2nd half of the 1st century
 3 Posuda tankih stijenki, početak 1. – prva polovina 2. stoljeća / Thin walled vessel, beginning of the 1st – first half of the 2nd century
 4 Keramički vrč, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Ceramic jug, 1st – 2nd century
 5 Keramička čaša, sredina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic glass, middle of the 1st century
 6 Posuda tankih stijenki, 1. – 2. stoljeće / Thin walled vessel, 1st – 2nd century
 7 Keramička lucerna trokutasto završenog nosa s volutama, sredina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna with trigonous ended nose and volutes, middle of the 1st century
 8 Cijevasti stakleni balsamarij, sredina 1. – početak 2. stoljeća / Tubular glass balsamarium, middle of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd century
 9 Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, oblik dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic urn of local production, long continuity shape

ARHEOLOŠKA KAMPANJA 2012.
ARCHAEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN IN 2012

Tijekom ove kampanje nastavljena su istraživanja na jugoistočnoj strani nekropole uz suhozid i nedaleko od njega, na površini od oko 53 m². Otvorene su dvije sonde, veća – sonda 4, u kojoj su otkrivena dva rimskodobna (NG 6, NG 8) i jedan helenistički grob



Sl./Fig. 13

(NG 7), te manja – sonda 5 s jednim rimskim ukopom (NG 9) u usjeku koso postavljene litice. (Sl. 13) Stanje materijala iz sonde 4 bilo je izrazito loše budući se na tom mjestu duže nalazio guštik s duboko ukorijenjenim drvećem i korovom. To se najbolje vidjelo na primjeru groba NG 6. Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, položena između priklesanog živca, s keramičkim tanjrom u svojstvu poklopca, godinama se nalazila na vertikali kojom je vegetacija poviše nje crpila vodu. (Sl. 14) Tako vlažan okoliš u kombinaciji s lošom kvalitetom materijala pretvorio je njene vanjske stijenke u nešto nalik svježoj nepečenoj glini koja se raspadala pri svakom dodiru te onemogućio nesmetano vađenje i konzervaciju. Nadalje, kroz otvore lucerne smještene uz urnu probilo se kapilarno korijenje narušavajući integritet, srećom dobro izrađene, keramičke svjetiljke s reljefno izvedenim motivom medvjeda na disku. (Sl. 15)

During this campaign, the excavations on the south-east side of the necropolis along and near the dry stone wall, on an area of about 53 square meters, were continued. Two trenches were opened, a larger one - trench 4, containing two graves from Roman times (NG 6, NG 8) and one Hellenistic grave (NG 7), and a smaller one - trench 5 with one Roman burial (NG 9) in the notch of the sloped cliff. (Fig. 13) The condition of the material from trench 4 was very bad because of the existing bush with deep-rooted trees and weed. This is best seen in the example of grave NG 6. A ceramic urn of local production, placed between processed solid rock with a ceramic plate as a lid, was located for years on the vertical and used by the vegetation above



Sl./Fig. 14



Nedaleko od tog mjesta, na udaljenosti manjoj od jednog metra, nalazila se posuda tankih stijenki pripisana istom grobu. (Sl. 16) Naime, već smo u prethodnoj, a to ćemo uvidjeti i u idućoj kampanji, nailazili na slične slučajeve koji svojom učestalošću navode na pomisao kako je prilaganje izričito posuda tankih stijenki, osim u sam grob i na granici ili nedaleko od ukopnog mjesta, bilo uvriježeno i vjerojatno pripadalo dijelu rituala kulta mrtvih. Možemo tek pretpostaviti, budući su ove posude korištene isključivo za piće, da se netom nakon polaganja urne i ostalog grobnog inventara iz njih popilo zadnji put u čast pokojnika, možda uz određene magijske formule, poslije čega su stavljane uz grob.

Posebne tragove liburnskih običaja ne nalazimo uz siromašni dječji grob NG 8, ni u helenističkoj inhumacijskoj grobnici NG 7, dimenzija 190 x 135 cm. Pravokutnog oblika, rađena dijelom od pravilno tesanih kamenova prislonjenih na liticu, ovu grobnicu je koristilo više generacija, zasigurno od 1. stoljeća prije Krista do 1. stoljeća nakon Krista. (Sl. 17) S obzirom na fragmentarnost kostiju pokojnika i grobnih priloga ne možemo točno utvrditi ni njihov broj niti točan vremenski raspon u kojem su se ovdje ukapali. Incineracija je bila u modi tijekom 1. i 2. stoljeća. Prije i nakon tog perioda prevladava ritus polaganja tijela pa je moguće da se trendovski raspoloženo stanovništvo Velike Mrdakovice nastavilo pokapati unutar ranijih prapovijesnih grobnica ili na nekoj drugoj još neotkrivenoj nekropoli. U suprotnom moramo zaključiti kako se u 3. stoljeću dogodio niz prirodnih nepogoda, veći potres ili osvajanje poradi čega se stanovništvo rezbežalo, a život na gradini prestao postojati.

it to draw water. (Fig. 14) This moist environment, combined with poor quality of the material turned its outer walls into something resembling fresh non-fired clay which disintegrated at each contact and prevented smooth extraction and conservation. Furthermore, the capillary roots penetrated through the lucernae openings located along the urn, compromising the integrity of the well-made ceramic lamp with the moulded motif of the bear on the disk. (Fig. 15) Near this place, at a distance of less than one meter there was a thin-walled vessel attributed to the same grave. (Fig. 16) In fact, we have already encountered in the previous, and we will see this in the next campaign, similar cases implying with their frequency the thought that contributions of specifically thin-walled vessels, except in the grave itself and at the border or near the burial place, was ingrained and probably a part of the cult of the dead ritual. Since these vessels were used exclusively for drinking, we can only assume that immediately after placing the urn and other grave inventory they were used for the last drink in honour of the deceased, perhaps with some magical formulae, after which they were put along the grave.

Special traces of Liburnian customs are not found with the poor child's grave NG 8, nor in the Hellenistic inhumation grave NG 7, measuring 190 x 135 cm. With its rectangular shape, made partly of ashlar stones reclined to the cliff, this grave was used by several generations, certainly from the first century BC to the first century AD. (Fig. 17) Due to the fragmentation of the bones of the deceased and the grave contributions, their number or the time span in which they were buried can not be accurately determined. Incineration was popular during the 1st and 2nd century. Before and after this period, the ritual of the placing of the body prevails, so it is possible that the trendy population of Velika Mrdakovice continued to bury their deceased in earlier prehistoric tombs or some other yet undiscovered necropolis. Otherwise, we must conclude that a series of natural disasters, a great earthquake or a conquest took place in the third Century, forcing the population to run away, and life on the hill fort ceased to exist.



Sl./Fig. 16



Sl./Fig. 15



Sl./Fig. 17

Keramički zvonoliki krater iz groba NG 7, 1. st. prije Krista / Ceramic bellshaped crater from grave NG 7, 1st century BC

ARHEOLOŠKA KAMPANJA 2013. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN IN 2013

Jedan od osnovnih ciljeva postavljenih početkom novih sustavnih arheoloških istraživanja bilo je određivanje svih gabarita nekropole – kampanjom 2013. konačno je utvrđen doseg pružanja liburnsko-rimskog groblja u smjeru sjeveroistoka. Istražena je površina od oko 100 m². (Sl. 18) Rezultati unutar sonde 6 i 7 nisu u prvi mah ispunili očekivanja, ali su iznijeli na svijetlo dana zanimljive nalaze organskog porijekla koji s velikom vjerojatnošću ubiciraju ustrinum ili mjesto druge kulturne namjene na položaju sonde 7. Naime, osim ulomaka prapovijesne i rimskodobne keramike tu je otkriveno i mnoštvo ostataka životinjskih kostiju, volaka, dagnji te morskih puževa porodice *Cerithiidae* – *Thericium vulgatum* poznatijih pod nazivom Obična vretenjača. (Sl. 19, 20) Kućice ovih mekušaca uz ljušturu dagnji utvrđene su i unutar jedne keramičke posude tijekom arheološke kampanje 2008. na Murteru te nesumnjivo pripadaju zasad nepoznatom materijalnom izrazu vjerovanja u zagrobni život. Na Velikoj Mrdakovici su i prilikom starijih istraživanja nekropole (1969. – 1974.) nalaženi volci – *Hexaplex trunculus*, također morska bića, pa njihovu pojavu unutar grobnih cjelina ne možemo objasniti ničim drugim doli namjernim prilaganjem. Kako je najveća



Sl./Fig. 18

One of the main goals set at the beginning of the new systematic archaeological research was to determine all dimensions of the necropolis – the campaign in 2013 finally determined the scope of the Liburnian - Roman cemetery in the north-east direction. An area of about 100 m² was explored. (Fig. 18) At first, the results inside the trenches 6 and 7 did not meet the expectations, but they brought some interesting findings of organic origin which most likely locate the ustrinum or the location for other cult purposes in position of trench 7. In fact, in addition to the fragments of prehistoric and Roman ceramics, many remains of animal bones, murexes, mussels and sea snails of the family *Cerithiidae* - *Thericium vulgatum* were discovered. (Fig. 19, 20) Shells of these molluscs, along with the shells of mussels, were also found and inside one ceramic vessel during the archaeological campaign in 2008 in Murter and they undoubtedly belong to the so far unknown material expression of belief in the afterlife. And during the previous research of the necropolis (1969 - 1974) on Velika Mrdakovica, murex - *Hexaplex trunculus*, also marine creatures, were also found, so their appearance within the grave units can not be explained by anything other than intentional contribution. Since the largest concentration of *Thericium vulgatum* shells was found outside the necropolis - along its north-eastern edge, the question of their purpose arises. The remains of animal bones imply a banquet organized according to Roman customs in honour of the deceased shortly after the burial or burnt offerings laid on the bier. This, a cult place for sure, could have a multipurpose role which, having in mind the insufficient written and other sources on Liburnian funeral rites, we are not able to fully figure out for the time being. We can not rule out the possibility of using sea snails to obtain natural colours, perhaps used in rituals, which are excreted by sea snails in small amounts as a product of a hypobranchial gland.



Sl./Fig. 19

koncentracija ljuštura Obične vretenjače utvrđena van nekropole, uz njen sjeveroistočni rub, postavlja se pitanje čemu su one služile. Ostaci životinjskih kostiju asociraju na banket upriličen po rimskom običaju umrlom u čast netom nakon pokopa ili na žrtve paljenice priložene na odru. Ovo, zasigurno kultno mjesto, moglo je imati i višenamjensku ulogu koju s obzirom na manjkavost pisanih i inih izvora o liburnskim pogrebnim običajima zasad nismo u stanju u potpunosti odgonetnuti. Ne možemo isključiti ni mogućnost upotrebe morskih puževa za dobivanje prirodnih boja, možda ritualno korištenih, koje u malim količinama izlučuju iz hipobranhijalne žlijezde. Te nijanse, osobito carskog purpura ekstrahirane iz volaka na tržištu su, po gramu, dostizale cijene veće i od zlata. Stoga nije isključivo da su neke manje i siromašnije zajednice ili pojedinci tražili i našli dostupniju i jeftiniju varijantu kojom su namirivali svoje potrebe.

Unutar sonde 8 otkriveno je šest grobova s raznovrsnim i zanimljivim materijalom smještenim u 1. polovinu 1. stoljeća. Vrijeme je to samih početaka vladavine Enejinih potomaka ovim prostorima i stoga izuzetno zanimljivo za izravan uvid u stupanj postignute inkorporacije rimske materijalne kulture na funerarne običaje autohtonog stanovništva. Još jednom je potvrđeno kako su liburnske veze s rimskim svijetom

These shades, especially the “Tyrian purple” extracted from the murex, were reaching prices on the market even higher than gold. So, we cannot exclude the fact that some smaller and poorer communities or individuals sought and found a more available and cheaper variation that met their own needs.

Trench 8 contained six graves with diverse and interesting material from the first half of the 1st century. It was the time of the very beginning of the reign of the “descendants of Aeneas” in this region and this is therefore extremely interesting for a direct insight into the level of achieved incorporation of Roman material culture in funerary customs of the indigenous population. Once again, it was confirmed that Liburnian ties with the Roman world were close, intensive and systematic already at the beginning of the new era. In addition to the traditional overseas familiarity between the two nations, the main reason for this is undoubtedly the well-established trade with most production centres along the Adriatic coast through the Mrdakovica port since the Hellenistic period. Whether this trade was a one-way trade and based solely on import of foreign goods or did the residents of Mrdakovica also offer certain products - perhaps the widely known Liburnian wine - based on the current level of exploration - we can not know. It is certain that from the Flavian period at the



Sl./Fig. 20



Sl./Fig. 21

bile tijesne, intenzivne i sustavne već početkom nove ere. Glavni razlog tomu je, osim tradicionalne prekomorske upućenosti dvaju naroda jednih na druge, i nesumnjivo ustaljena trgovinska razmjena preko mrdakovičke luke još od helenističkog doba s većinom proizvodnih centara uz jadransku obalu. Je li trgovina bila jednosmjerna i bazirana isključivo na importu stranih dobara ili su „Mrdakovičani“ i sa svoje strane nudili određene proizvode – možda nadaleko poznato liburnsko vino – na osnovi dosadašnjeg stupnja istraženosti ne možemo znati. Sigurno je da najkasnije od flavijevskog perioda domaći stanovnici kao sredstvo plaćanja koriste rimski novac, ali ga ne upotrebljavaju unutar pogrebnog ritusa.

latest, the locals use Roman coins as means of payment, but they do not use it within the burial rite. In fact, according to the Greco - Roman tradition and belief, one (gold, silver or copper) coin was placed next to the deceased to pay the tariff of the ferryman Charon for the passage of the soul across the mythical river Styx to the underworld. This custom is seen only in one previously devastated grave (NG 11), where, given the context, an extremely rare and valuable bronze as of emperor Vespasianus is found. (Fig. 21) Based on the fragmentarily preserved, but recognizable material, insufficient for a complete reconstruction of any found vessel, other types of grave contributions were identified. a locally



Sl./Fig. 22

Naime prema grčko-rimskoj tradiciji i vjerovanju jedna kovanica (zlatnik, srebrenjak ili bakrenjak) stavljana je uz pokojnika da bi se namirila tarifa lađara Harona za prijevoz duše preko mitske rijeke Stiks u podzemni svijet. Ovaj običaj je zabilježen tek u jednom otprije devastiranom grobu (NG 11) u kojem je s obzirom na kontekst pronađen izuzetno raritetan i vrijedan brončani as cara Vespazijana. (Sl. 21) Na temelju fragmentarno sačuvanog, ali prepoznatljivog materijala, nedovoljnog za cjelovitu rekonstrukciju ijedne otkrivene posude, utvrđene su i ostale vrste grobnih priloga: keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, posuda tankih stijenki, dvije staklene boce trbušastog tijela, keramička uljna svjetiljka s pečatom radionice NERI, željezni čavli i stakleni *modiolus*. Modiol možemo nazvati i mjericom jer mu je upravo to izvorna namjena – mjerenje različitih sastojaka tijekom pripravljanja jela. Ponekad je služio i kao tanjur ili urna kao na stenjevačkoj nekropoli kod Zagreba. (Sl. 22) Na mrdakovičkom gradu mrtvih to nije bio slučaj, ali se i ovim nalazom s kraja 1. i početka 2. stoljeća naš lokalitet može pohvaliti budući je prvi i dosad jedini takve vrste na cijelom području djelovanja Muzeja grada Šibenika.

No tu ne prestaje priča o zanimljivim i vrijednim nalazima otkrivenim tijekom ove kampanje. Uz južni rub sonde 8 istražena su tri groba pokrivena kamenim pločama s obzidom od neobrađenih kamenova. (Sl. 24)

produced ceramic urn, a thin-walled vessel, two bellied bottles made of glass, a ceramic oil lamp with a stamp of the NERI workshop, iron nails and a *modiolus* made of glass. The *modiolus* can also be referred to as a measuring cup, because this is its original purpose - measuring of different ingredients during the preparation of meals. Sometimes it served as a plate or an urn, f.i. on the Stenjevec necropolis near Zagreb. (Fig. 22) This was not the case on the Mrdakovica city of the dead, but with this finding dating back to the end of the first and the beginning of the second century, our site is proud to be the first and so far the only of its kind in the whole area of the Šibenik City Museum.

But this is not the end of the story of interesting and valuable findings discovered during this campaign. Along the southern edge of trench 8, three graves covered with stone slabs walled with rough stone were explored. (Fig. 24) With more or less usual contributions (urn, lucerna, fibulae, glass vessel, nails...), grave NG 10 was "hiding" some surprises. (Fig. 23) During the cleaning of the soil surface layer and above and around the urn we encountered a multitude of fragments of a broken ceramic bowl decorated with moulded vegetative motifs. Only after a complete reconstruction and conservation, we were able to see the superb craftsmanship and meticulousness of an unknown southern gallic master who made this form in the workshop of La Graufenseque around the middle of the 1st century AD. So far, this form in the necropolis of Velika Mrdakovica remains undetermined. A beautiful ceramic chalice, a product of production centres of central Italy belongs to the slightly earlier period. It is a unique Mrdakovica necropolis item. Green colour, which covers the outer walls of the recipient with the geometric motifs of ovals and depictions of various floral elements (branches of palm trees and rough bindweed with leaves) and birds inserted into the composition, is largely preserved. There was a chalice in the bowl, much like the cups we have today, and a bellied glass jug with a band handle laid next to the urn. Among other contributions, we can point out the lucerna of the Firma type, with the seal of the SATURNINI workshop, two bronze Aucissa fibu-

Uz više-manje uobičajene priloge (urnu, lucernu, fibulu, staklenu posudu, čavle...) grob NG 10 je krio i neka iznenađenja. (Sl. 23) Tijekom čišćenja površinskog sloja zemlje te ponad i uokolo urne nailazili smo na mnoštvo ulomaka razbijene keramičke zdjele ukrašene reljefno izvedenim vegetabilnim motivima. Tek nakon cjelovite rekonstrukcije i konzervacije na vidjelo je došla vrhunska umješnost i minucioznost nepoznatog južnogalskog majstora gdje je u radionici La Graufenseque oko sredine 1. stoljeća nastao i ovaj oblik dosad neutvrđen na nekropoli Velike Mrdakovice. Nešto ranijem vremenu pripada i predivan keramički pehar, produkt proizvodnih centara sjeverne Italije. I on je unikat mrdakovičkog grada mrtvih. U velikoj mjeri je sačuvana zelena boja kojom su premazane izvanjske stjenke recipijenta s geometrijskim motivima ovala i prikazima raznolikih cvjetnih elemenata (grane palmi i tetivike s listovima) te ptica umetnutih u kompoziciju. U peharu se nalazila čaša, umnogome nalik današnjima, a pokraj urne stakleni vrč sferičnog tijela s trakastom ručicom. Od ostalih priloga možemo izdvojiti lucernu Firma tipa s pečatom radionice SATURNINI, dvije brončane *aucissa* fibule i željezne čavle.

I materijal groba NG 12 (Sl. 25) će obogatiti postav budućeg vodičkog muzeja – keramičkim skifosom, čime je povećan ukupan broj posuda tipa Sarius – najzastupljenih na ovom nalazištu, dok keramička urna s reljefno izvedenom lunulastom drškom iz groba NG 13 zorno svjedoči o kontinuitetu naslijeđenih i zadržanih prapovijesnih oblika. (Sl. 26)

Na zanimljivu i indikativnu situaciju smo naišli prilikom čišćenja groba NG 14. Naime, uz sačuvane ulomke keramičke urne, dio kobaltnoplave staklene narebrene kupe i posudu tankih stijenki, na površini od 1 m² i dubini do 50 cm ispremiješani u sloju zemlje su bili fragmenti keramičkog vrča oker boje. Oni nesumnjivo upućuju na devastaciju prouzročenu oranjem ili kopanjem te ukazuju na oprez pripisivanju svih razbijenih predmeta, makar bili dijelovi grobnih cjelina, pogrebnom ritualu, već ponekad i naknadnom djelovanju ljudske ruke. Upravo stoga se ulomci različitih posuda nalaze van grobova, nerijetko dosta udaljeni od njih, u



Sl./Fig. 23

lae and iron nails.

The material of the NG 12 grave (Fig. 25) will also contribute to the collection of the future Vodice Museum - with a ceramic Skyphos, increasing the total number of Sarius type vessels – the most represented at this site, while the ceramic urn with the moulded lunulated handle from grave NG 13 vividly testifies the continuity of inherited and retained prehistoric forms. (Fig. 26)

We encountered an interesting and indicative situation when we were cleaning grave NG 14. Namely, along the preserved fragments of a ceramic urn, we found a part of a cobalt blue ribbed bowl made of glass and a thin-walled vessel, on a surface of 1 m² and at a depth of 50 cm, as well as fragments of a ceramic ochre jug, mixed in a layer of earth. They clearly point to the devastation caused by ploughing or digging and suggest caution when attributing the broken items to funeral rites, even if they are parts of grave units, but sometimes also to the subsequent action of human hand. That is why fragments of various vessels are found outside of graves, often quite distant from them, in the surface layer of the soil.

Grave NG 15, (Fig. 27) explored in 2013, had the most items. Apart from the iron nails, it contained a total of 10 items, among others, a silver *aucissa* fibula decorated with bevelled notches, (Fig. 28) *lucerna* (Fig.



Sl./Fig. 24



Sl./Fig. 25



Sl./Fig. 26

GROB
GRAVE NG10

- 1 Keramička zdjela, sredina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic bowl, middle of the 1st century 2 Staklena čaša, 2. polovina 1. stoljeća / Glass beaker, 2nd half of the 1st century 3 Keramički tanjur, 1. polovina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic plate, 1st half of the 1st century 4 Keramička lucerna radionice SATURNINI, 2. polovina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna of the SATURNINI workshop, 2nd half of the 1st century 5 Stakleni kuglasti vrčić, 1. stoljeće / Spherical glass juglet, 1st century 6 Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, oblik dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic urn of local production, long continuity shape 7 Srebrna fibula tipa *aucissa*, 1. stoljeće / Silver fibula of the *Aucissa* type, 1st century 8 Keramički pehar, 1. polovina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic chalice, 1st half of the 1st century

GROB
GRAVE NG12

- 1 Keramička lucerna radionice FORTIS, 2. polovina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna of the FORTIS workshop, 2nd half of the 1st century
 2 Keramički tanjur, 1. stoljeće / Ceramic plate, 1st century 3 Staklena boca bikoničnog tijela (balzamarij?), 1. – 2. stoljeće / Glass bottle with a biconical body (*balsamarium?*), 1st – 2nd century 4 Brončane fibule tipa *aucissa*, 1. stoljeće / Bronze fibulae of the *Aucissa* type, 1st century
 5 Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, oblik dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic urn of local production, long continuity shape 6 Posuda tipa *Sarius*, 1. stoljeće / Vessel of the *Sarius* type, 1st century

GROB
GRAVE NG13

- 1 Keramička posuda – oblik dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic vessel, long continuity shape 2 Keramička lucerna oblo završenog nosa s volutama, 2. polovina 1. stoljeća / Ceramic lucerna with round ended nose and volutes, 2nd half of the 1st century 3 Keramička urna lokalne proizvodnje, oblik dugog kontinuiteta / Ceramic urn of local production, long continuity shape 4 Brončana fibula tipa *aucissa*, 1. stoljeće / Bronze fibula of the *Aucissa* type, 1st century



površinskom sloju tla.

Inventarom najizdašniji grob istražen 2013. bio je onaj numeriran brojem NG 15. (Sl. 27) Ne računajući željezne čavle sadržavao je ukupno 10 predmeta, među ostalim srebrnu, kosim urezima ukrašenu *aucissa* fibulu (Sl. 28), lucernu (Sl. 29) te manju keramičku posudu iznimno tankih stijenki koja se nažalost zbog uznapredovalog stupnja degradacije materijala ni uz najbolju volju i znanje konzervatora neće moći konzervirati.

U dosadašnjem tekstu pokušali smo na osnovi grobnog i ostalog materijala te zapažanja stečenih tijekom arheoloških istraživanja na terenu bar dijelom dati uvid u pogrebne običaje i materijalnu ostavštinu liburnske zajednice na Velikoj Mrdakovici. Mogli bismo reći, što je i bilo očekivano, kako smo malo više odškrinuli vrata povijesti i dobili potpuniju, iako ne i cjelovitu, sliku života naših prethodnika. Danas se puno više no prije 40 godina, kad su vršena prva istraživanja ovog lokaliteta, poklanja pažnja interdisciplinarnom pristupu rješavanja problema. To je tekovina vremena i kao takva nam nudi nezamislive mogućnosti. Uzorci zemlje iz probranih keramičkih i staklenih posuda s nekropole poslani su na *Pennsylvania State University*. Bit će zanimljivi rezultati kemijskih i inih analiza koji će nam uz pomoć najnovijih znanstvenih dostignuća pružiti bolji uvid u onodobne pogrebne običaje odigrane, ne zaboravimo, prije punih dvije tisuće godina.



Sl./Fig. 27



Sl./Fig. 28

29) and a smaller ceramic vessel with extremely thin walls, which unfortunately due to the advanced stage of degradation of the material cannot be reconstructed, even with the best will and knowledge of the conservators.

Based on the grave and other material as well as observations gained during archaeological research at the site, the text above tried at least to provide a partial insight into the funeral customs and material legacy of the Liburnian community at Velika Mrdakovica. We could say that we opened the doors of history a little further and got a wider, though not a complete picture of the lives of our “predecessors”, which was expected. Nowadays, a lot more than 40 years ago, when the first excavations of this site were carried out, attention is paid to the interdisciplinary approach to solving problems. It is the legacy of time, and as such, it offers us enormous opportunities. Soil samples from the selected ceramic and glass vessels from the necropolis were sent to the *Pennsylvania State University*. It will be very interesting to see the results of chemical and other analyses, which will, with the help of the latest scientific developments, provide a better insight into the contemporary funeral practices performed two thousand years ago.



Sl./Fig. 29

UMJESTO ZAKLJUČKA INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

Velika Mrdakovica je danas tek jedno od manjih brdašaca i uzvisina koje se steru nedaleko desne obale Krke i ničim se posebno od ostalih ne izdvaja. Pa dobro, možda je malo viša, ali tek rijetki Vodičani i Zatonjani, koji u njenoj blizini imaju svoja polja, vinograde i maslinike, znaju da se negdje na vrhu kriju ostaci rimskih zidina, a u podnožju, donedavno skriveno u guštiku, staro groblje što ga istražuju arheolozi šibenskog muzeja. Sve to bi se u skoroj budućnosti trebalo promijeniti jer 2014. godine, upravo u trenutku dok pišem ove retke, završavaju posljednje pripreme velikog projekta kojim je zamišljeno povezivanje triju dijelova mrdakovičke svojine – cisterne Pišča, naselja i nekropole – pješačkom stazom u jednu cjelinu te prezentacija liburnsko-rimskog grada i nekropole nakon istraživanja i konzervacije javnosti.

Tek tada će ovaj iznimni arheološki lokalitet, na kojem osim zanimljivih tragova prošlosti prebivaju zakonom zaštićeni gušteri zelembaći, orlovi i zečevi te raznovrsno mediteransko ljekovito i ukrasno bilje, dobiti zasluženo mjesto na svjetskim turističkim i kulturnim kartama. Tek tada će se od Velike Mrdakovice i njene baštine moći i živjeti. Kad ona ponovo oživi. Kad eho njenih sjećanja postane živa slika u pamćenju budućih naraštaja!

Na temelju rezultata starijih istraživanja (1969. – 1974.) i posljednjih triju arheoloških kampanja možemo sa sigurnošću tvrditi kako je antički grad živih, kao i grad mrtvih tijekom svoje šestostoljetne, zasigurno burne, povijesti išao ukorak s vremenom, pratio svjetska strujanja i trendove onoga doba te bio, ako ne u središtu zbivanja, onda svakako njihov neizostavni dio. Uvoz raznovrsnog jantarnog, keramičkog i staklenog materijala iz grčkih kolonija na istočnoj obali Jadrana te rimskih proizvodnih centara u sjevernoj i srednjoj Italiji kao i produkti lokalnih, južnogalskih te sirijsko-palestinskih radionica ukazuju na razvijene trgovinske veze koje je tadašnje liburnsko stanovništvo uspostavi-

Velika Mrdakovica is today just one of the smaller hills and uplifts that spread near the right bank of the Krka river and does not stand out from the others by anything in particular. Well, maybe it is a little higher, but only a few people from Zaton and Vodice, which have their fields, vineyards and olive gardens in its vicinity, know that somewhere at the top the remains of Roman walls and at the foot, until recently hidden in a bush, an old cemetery explored by archaeologists of the Šibenik City Museum are hidden. All this should change in the near future because in 2014, just as I write these lines, final preparations of a major project, which is planned to connect the three parts of Mrdakovica – the tank „Pišča“, the settlement and the necropolis – by a footpath into a single unit, and to present the Liburnian - Roman town and the necropolis after research and conservation to the public.

This exceptional archaeological site, housing not only interesting traces of the past but also the legally protected European green lizard, eagles and rabbits as well as a variety of Mediterranean herbs and ornamental plants, will then get its well-deserved place on the global tourist and cultural maps. Velika Mrdakovica and its heritage will only then be able to provide for the future. When it comes to life again! When the echo of its memories becomes a living image in the memory of future generations!

Based on the results of earlier studies (1969 - 1974) and the last three archaeological campaigns, we can claim with certainty that the ancient city of the living, as well as the “city of the dead” during its six centuries old, certainly turbulent history kept up with time, followed the global flows and trends of the time, and was perhaps not in the centre, but certainly an indispensable part of events. Import of various amber, ceramic and glass materials from the Greek colonies on the east coast of the Adriatic and Roman production

lo s prekomorskim i regionalnim čimbenicima. Osim značajne prometne veze, koja se ostvarivala preko zaton-ske luke, Velika Mrdakovica se nalazila i uz cestu koja je Jader (Zadar) povezivala s glavnim gradom rimske provincije Dalmacije Salonom (Solinom). O dominantnom geostrateškom položaju koji je zauzimala govori pregled vodičkog akvatorija, ušća Krke, gradina na Bribirskoj glavici, šibenskom sv. Mihovilu, itd., a nedaleko je, u Rakitničkom polju, bila smještena i jedna od samo dviju sigurno ubiciranih rimskih keramičarskih peći za proizvodnju krovnog crijepa u Dalmaciji. Njeni zapadni obronci skrivaju danas napušteno selo Srdariće, jedno od rijetkih, u cijelosti, netaknutih autohtonih rustičnih cjelina s kućama rađenim tradicionalnom tehnikom gradnje kamenom.

Život je, kao što vidimo, na ovom mjestu utihnuo, no sve nam govori da će se mrdakovička škrinja s blagom uskoro probuditi i još jednom zasjati punim sjajem.

centres in northern and central Italy, as well as local products, southern gallic products and products of the Syrian - Palestinian workshops indicate developed trade connections which the Liburnian population established with overseas and regional factors. In addition to significant transport connections through the Zaton port, Velika Mrdakovica was also located along the road that connected Jader (Zadar) with the capital of the Roman province of Dalmatia, Salona (Solin). The dominant geostrategic position it occupied is evidenced by an oversight of the Vodice water surface, the Krka estuary, the hillforts on Bribirska glavica, Šibenik's St. Michael... Nearby in Rakitničko polje one of the only two Roman ceramic kilns for the production of roof tiles in Dalmatia was located. Its western slopes are hiding the now abandoned village Srdarići, one of the few intact indigenous rustic units with houses made in the traditional technique of building in stone.

As we can see, this place was abandoned but something tells us that the “Mrdakovica treasure chest” will wake up soon and shine once again in full splendour.

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