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# GOLD AND SILVER JEWELRY FROM CENTRAL BALKAN PROVINCES OF ROMAN EMPIRE

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**I**n the first century of Roman domination silver jewelry in the Balkan region is very numerous, and local production of these decorations lasted until the middle of the 3rd century. In that production an important role played the autochthonous component. Gold jewelry from this region is of East-Mediterranean origin, and some shapes of ornaments and use of the techniques of filigree and granulation point, also, to the penetration of the Hellenistic influence deep into the Balkan inland. The traditional forms of Roman decorations, used in the Balkan provinces during the second half of the 3rd century, can be seen in the set of gold jewelry discovered in the mausoleum at Šarkamen (East Serbia), which, probably, belonged to the mother of Maximinus Daia. But, some forms of this jewelry find their best parallels in the forms represented on the fresco from the ceiling of Constantine's palace in Trier.

**Key words:** Roman jewelry, goldsmith's techniques, autochthonous decoration style, Central Balkans

Gold and, especially, silver jewelry in the central Balkans appears in a relatively big quantity already in the last centuries BC. Made, mostly, in the local centres, on one hand it expresses all the tendencies of the general style of artistic handicrafts in one epoch, while, on the other hand, it reflects the local situation and the specific

qualities. These very local characteristics, present in the jewelry production in the Central Balkans during the Roman Period, enabled us to widen to a certain degree the existing definition of Roman goldsmithing as the Hellenistic-Roman or Italic-Roman one, depending on that which influences, East-Mediterranean or Italic-Etruscan,

Fig. 1. Bracelet, silver, Tekija

Fig. 2. Ring, gold, Tekija

were dominant in the forming of style in the certain regions. Namely, in the Balkan-Danubian provinces of the Empire during the Roman Period appeared also some forms of jewelry which have an autochthonous character, created through the transformation of influences, which, during the earlier periods, came from the Aegean cultural circle.<sup>1</sup>

The region of Central Balkans, as a natural hinterland of Greece, very early came into contact with the achievements of this civilization. Already since the middle of the 7th century BC developed the intensive commercial contacts with the Greek world, that lead to the quickened formation of the local tribal aristocracy, which begins to acquire the luxurious jewelry, decorated with filigree and granulation. The use of these refined goldsmithing techniques, for which we have evidence already in the first half of the 5th century BC, continued its existence in the material culture of the local population also during the Roman Period.

In the first centuries of Roman domination, the silver jewelry is in the Balkan region very numerous. This fact could be brought into connection with the considerable production of silver decorations as far back as in the Pre-Roman Period. An intensive production of silver decorations lasted in this region until the middle of the 3rd century. The numerous single finds and hoards of silver jewelry from this period are a testimony that in the whole Balkan-Danubian region in the local production the autochthonous component had an important role, originating from the traditions of La Tène culture, which in its manifestations included implicitly many universally accepted elements, common in this territory for the Illyrian, Dacian, Thracian and Celtic substratum. In the light of these assumptions the production of silver jewelry on the territory of Upper Moesia during the period of Early Empire can be roughly divided into two cultural horizons.<sup>2</sup>

The first horizon covers the period from the Roman

conquests to the 9th decade of the 1st century AD and is represented by the closed finds of silver jewelry, which could be brought into connection with the last phase of the Dacian silverware hoards, because two hoards from this horizon, those from Tekija and Bare, were discovered in that part of the territory of Upper Moesia which was exposed to strong influences from Dacia. The bracelets and rings with the over-lapped and spirally wrapped up ends from the hoards Tekija (Fig. 1) and Bare are very solid, same as some other forms of silver jewelry in the frame of Dacian cultural complex. The pendants in the shape of miniature wedges and tools hanged on them are well known in the central Balkan region since the Hallstatt Period, and they have, most probably, an apotropaic character. The golden ring from Tekija<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 2), and also the massive silver bracelets with over-lapped and spirally wrapped up ends<sup>4</sup> form in this find belong to the group of jewelry decorated with the miniature axes. But, although the ring from Tekija repeats the shape of massive silver bracelets, in its execution can be noticed some specific qualities. In the first place, it is made of gold, and on its shoulders and around two spiral coils on the head the golden wire is wrapped up, executed in the form of astragalus. In the centre of both coils there is a granule, and one of the spiral coils has a miniature axe, fixed with the wire executed in the form of astragalus. This motif, with the strong apotropaic meaning, appears in the second half of the 1st century among the Dacian finds south from the Carpatian Mountains. But, the miniature axe on the ring from Tekija is not executed in the form of the pendant, but is fixed to the head of the ring, which is decorated with granules and wire which imitates the filigree wire. The use of gold and techniques characteristic for the Hellenistic goldsmithing in the execution of the ring decorated with the symbol which had an important apotropaic role among the southern Dacians, bears witness to the strong influences of Hellenistic toreutic on formation of the local jewelry production. In the Dacian



<sup>1</sup> Popović 1996 a, 52-53; 149-150.

<sup>2</sup> Popović 1994, 25-31; 89-94.

<sup>3</sup> Mano-Zisi 1957, nr. 7, T. III, 7; Popović 1992, cat. I.

<sup>4</sup> Mano-Zisi 1957, nr. 10, 12, T. VI, VII, IX, 12.

silverware hoards, as also in the Bare hoard, are also well represented the twisted torqueses with different endings,<sup>5</sup> as also the bracelets whose ends are solved in the form of the snake's head and tail.<sup>6</sup>

Some forms of this jewelry, which continue the older traditions of decorations from this region, as the silver snakelike bracelets, stayed in the material culture of the population of these regions in an almost unchanged form till the 2nd-3rd century, into which period are dated the snakelike bracelets found at few sites in central Serbia and Danube Valley (Kutina near Niš,<sup>7</sup> Juhor,<sup>8</sup> the surroundings of Kladovo,<sup>9</sup> Nova Božurna<sup>10</sup>). Although on somewhat smaller scale, in the Roman Period stayed in use the silver twisted torqueses with different endings. These decorations, together with the anchor-like fibulae, plaited chains, pendants in the form of ivy-leaf and bracelets made of plaited and twisted wire, appear in a great number as detached finds, or, even more frequently, in the frame of closed unities with a very similar composition, forming in that way the horizon of Balkan-Danubian jewelry hoards, all of which contain the different combinations of these decorations.<sup>11</sup> All of these objects are part of the standard repertoire of jewelry on the Balkan-Danubian territory, and to their wide use bear witness also the representations in relief, numerous especially in the Drina Valley. This second horizon of the silver jewelry hoards, consisting of the closed finds from the sites Janja, Dvorska (Drina Valley), Bela Reka (Mačva), Juhor (Velika Morava Valley), Gornji Vakuf, Bukovica, Bare-Tribovo (central and west Bosnia), Nova Božurna (south Serbia), Arčar (Bulgarian Danube region), Virtopu, Urdiniča, Moțaței, Drănic, Craiova, Bălăcița (Roumanian Danube region), Bumbesti, Gorj, Așel, Beia (slopes of Carpatian Mountains), Salacska, *Brigetio* (Hungary) has a characteristic trait that most of the finds contain silver anchor-like fibulae and plaited silver chains, and besides these forms also the bracelets made of twisted and plaited wire, twisted torqueses, leaf-like pendants and pendants in the form of lunula are represented. The silver jewelry hoards from this horizon are encountered in the wide geographical region from west Bosnia to the central parts of Roumania. Certain specimens of these decorations are ornamented with filigree and granulation, which shows strong and long lasting influence from the Greek soil onto the Balkan hinterland.<sup>12</sup>

The most impressive specimen of goldsmithing from the end of the 2nd century is a necklace from the hoard from Bela Reka near Šabac, whose depositing is dated by the coins of Commodus from 182. That is a massive

necklace consisting of 29 silver garlic-shaped beads (Melonenperlen), decorated with filigree wire, connected on one end with the silver twisted chain, and on the other with the clasp consisting of two segments, luxuriously decorated with filigree, granulation and inserts made of black glass-paste (Fig. 3).<sup>13</sup> On its constructive elements can be noticed the different and multi-leveled cultural influences, whose starting-point is in the Greek-Hellenistic cultural circle. Namely, the garlic-shaped beads made of silver tin appear in the Balkans already at the end of the Archaic Period,<sup>14</sup> probably as the imitation of the big glass beads of the same shape, which stay in use also in the Roman Period. On the other hand, rich decoration of the clasp consisting of two segments on the necklace bears witness to the Hellenistic models and traditions. The hook on one of its segments, which was pulled through the ring on the other, was executed in the shape of a swan's head. This, on one hand, reminds of the ends of Dacian torqueses from the group C 1b,<sup>15</sup> and on the other, of the upper corners and changeovers of the grips to the rims on the silver vessels, in the first place of paterae from the 1st - 3rd century.<sup>16</sup> The origin of this motif lies in the works of Hellenistic toreutic, and its use on the clasp of the necklace can be the consequence of the long-lasting Hellenistic goldsmith's traditions, but also of their indirect influence through the cultural streamings from the Dacian, i.e. Italic cultural circle.



The jewelry of local style, in the first place the silver one, in slightly transformed shapes continued to be produced

Fig. 3. Diadem, silver, gold, Juhor

<sup>5</sup> Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 a, cat. 1-5, fig. 1-3, Pl. I, II; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 50-54.

<sup>6</sup> Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 a, cat. 12, 13, fig. 11. 3-4, Pl. XI. 1-2; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 61, 62.

<sup>7</sup> Popović - Borić - Brešković 1994 a, cat. 12, 13, fig. 11. 3-4, Pl. XI. 1-2; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 61, 62.

<sup>8</sup> Popović 2002, cat. 5, 6.

<sup>9</sup> Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 114, 115 (with cited literature).

<sup>10</sup> Jovanović 1978, 82, cat. 6, fig. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Popović 1994, 25-31; 89-94; Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 b, 31-44; 60-68.

<sup>12</sup> Popović 1996 139-154.

<sup>13</sup> Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 b, cat. 8, T. III; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 84.

<sup>14</sup> Srejović, Vukadin 1988, 8, T. IV, 4, 5, 6; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 11/5, 6 (find from Kruševica, first half of the 5th century BC).

<sup>15</sup> Horedt 1973, 12, Abb. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Baratte 1993, 151-153.

Fig. 4. Necklace, silver, Bela Reka

and used till the middle of the 3rd century. The rare use of gold for producing the traditional forms of jewelry can be explained by the existing style of decorating with the silver ornaments, as also by the fact that gold was less accessible to the local population. But, certain forms were executed also in gold, to which bears witness the bracelet from the Bela Reka hoard,<sup>17</sup> which, together with the silver specimen from the same find,<sup>18</sup> is a good example of continuation of using the Hellenistic technique of meticulous filigree and granulation till the end of the 2nd century. The other shapes of bracelets, characteristic for this horizon of jewelry, like those with the over-lapped and spirally wrapped ends, with or without the volutoid loops on the heads, otherwise very numerous in silver, are very seldom represented in gold. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the gold jewelry solved in the form of wire rings whose ends are lapped one over another and, after that, spirally wrapped up on the opposite shoulder, or whose head is decorated with volutoidly bent wire, in the Serbian Danube region appear already since the beginning of the 2nd century in the form of simple earrings,<sup>19</sup> although these decorations are not represented in such great numbers as the analogous specimens in silver. The similar conclusion can be drawn also for the torques that appear in gold in a small number of specimens. One of them, found in *Oescus* in Bulgaria,<sup>20</sup> had a hanged lunula, which is also a form of decoration well known from the closed finds of silver jewelry of autochthonous character. Gold pendants in the form of lunula, however, do not always have to be connected with the continuation of the local traditions, because their use during the Roman Period became very widespread on the whole territory of the Empire. On the other hand, the plaited columniform chains, ending with tubuli decorated with filigree and granulation, which are characteristic of the local production of silver jewelry, were not produced in gold, and the gold chains plaited in such way have different characteristics. They were worn around the neck, as necklaces, while the silver plaited chains were connecting the anchor-like fibulae on the shoulders, or they were forming a specific decoration on the chest. Consequently, the traditional forms of silver jewelry, in use until the middle of the 3rd century, are very seldom reproduced in gold. But, some forms of gold jewelry, which are not represented in the horizon of silver jewelry of autochthonous character, bear witness, in all probability, to the local production of decorations developed through the transformation of earlier Hellenistic models. This concerns, above all, the diadems, composed of the segments of gold tin in the shape of a leaf. The specimens

from the necropoles on the Kosmaj region represent, most probably, parts of this jewelry, known also from the grave finds from *Scupi*, *Ulpiana* and *Municipium DD*.<sup>21</sup> To the other type of this jewelry belongs the ribbon-like diadem from the find from Juhor (Fig. 4), made of silver, with applied central part made of gold sheet, decorated with radially placed peltae, executed with filigree. By its conception and decoration it is a testimony of the penetration of the Hellenistic influences deeply into the Balkan inland, their longevity and symbiosis with the local traditions.<sup>22</sup>



Most of the forms of gold jewelry in the Central Balkan provinces of the Empire are of the East-Mediterranean origin. The strong influence of the Romanized Hellenistic centres in the East confirms, in the first place, the appearance of some variants of the simple earrings made of gold wire, synchronously at the necropoles in Guberevac and *Viminacium*, as also at the sites in Syria or Cyprus.<sup>23</sup> This can be explained by a strong wave of moving of the population from the East to the Danubian provinces, which is confirmed by the epigraphic monuments from Guberevac and the whole mining region on Kosmaj. Among those immigrants were, for sure, also the artisans-jewelers, who, together with the newly settled veterans originating from the east provinces, had influence on the formation of the style of production and use of gold

<sup>17</sup> Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 b, cat. 10, fig. 4. 2, Pl. IV, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 b, cat. 9, fig. 4. 1, Pl. IV, 2; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 85.

<sup>19</sup> Popović - Borić-Brešković 1994 b, cat. 9, fig. 4. 1, Pl. IV, 2; Antičko srebro / Antique Silver 1994, cat. 85.

<sup>20</sup> Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, cat. 84.

<sup>21</sup> Popović 1996 a, cat. 168, 169; Jovanović 1978, 50, cat. 1-5, fig. 96, 97.

<sup>22</sup> Popović 2002, 56-59; 102-104.

<sup>23</sup> Popović 1996 a, 55, 151.



jewelry. The East-Mediterranean influences can be noticed also on the necklaces composed of the multicolored beads and segments of a chain formed into loop and, especially, on the necklaces made of beads of gold tin. On these necklaces are mostly used the tubular, hollow beads, widened in the middle, which were used for a long time in the Mediterranean Basin. The tradition of producing beads and pendants made of gold tin, in the shape of vases, originating from the Aegean cultural circle, was continued, on somewhat smaller scale, through the activity of the local centres, whose artisans, by all means, were by origin from the Hellenophone or east provinces. The beads in the shape of vases facing each other and connected at the rims,<sup>24</sup> from the necropoles in the Kosmaj mining region, are an example of the good quality of a local product whose shape reflects strong Hellenistic traditions, and which is, by all means, a product of jewelers, immigrants from the East. On the strong Hellenistic traditions were based also the bracelets with a hinge, represented in the collection of Roman jewelry in the National Museum in Belgrade by a specimen made of lignite, whose ends are coated with gold sheet.<sup>25</sup> The appearance of the bracelets of such construction in the Moesian Danubian region was registered already at the end of the 1st century, because among the jewelry from the Bare hoard there was also a bracelet with ends in the shape of snake-heads, which are connected to the central medallion by a hinge.<sup>26</sup> That exceptional specimen was also made under the influences of Hellenistic goldsmithing, in the first place of goldsmithing from *Olbia*, which had a great influence on the formation of the style of decorations which belong to the horizon of Dacian hoards of silver jewelry. These early influences of the goldsmithing centres on the Black Sea coast are confirmed also by the appearance of the motif of Hercules' knot on some rings from the same find. But, that motif, adopted from the Hellenistic goldsmithing and rather popular on the Roman jewelry, is not registered in great measure on the gold decorations in the Central Balkans, although it appears on the gold earrings decorated with filigree and granulation, discovered in the graves in Mala Kopašnica near Leskovac, in *Viminacium* and Prahovo (*Aquae*).<sup>27</sup> Of similar construction are the earrings from Bulgaria, from the unknown site in the vicinity of Botevgrad and from the vicinity of Vidin.<sup>28</sup> Although the motif of Hercules' knot in the finds from the west provinces of the Empire appears very often also as a segment of some necklaces, the jewelry solved in this way is not known among the finds in Serbia.

Besides the cultural impulses from the East-

Mediterranean circle, which already in the early 2nd century had influence on the formation of style of gold jewelry in the Balkan inland, some forms show also the existence of west influences, in the first place of the Italic ones. This concerns mostly the widespread pendants in the form of a bulla, very numerous in the graves dated between the end of the 1st and the middle of the 3rd century from the necropolis Više Grobalja in *Viminacium*.<sup>29</sup> That jewelry the Romans took over from the Late Etruscan forms, and the finds from *Viminacium* confirm that the bullae in the course of time acquired the characteristics of amulets and that they were used as jewelry for children and young girls. But, as they became popular very early and were mass-produced, it is possible that this jewelry did not come to Upper Moesia directly from Italy, but through indirect influences.

Since the middle of the 2nd century an important characteristic of the Roman style is a wide use of semi-precious stones, varicolored pastes and pearls. That polychromatic style is observable not only on the earrings, but also on the necklaces. The desire for effect of luxury reflects itself also in the use of filigree and granulation, or of imitations of these techniques. However, the ornaments made in this way by the fineness of their execution do not reach the quality of the Hellenistic models, which was preserved on the specimens of jewelry of autochthonous character, made under the influences from the earlier epochs. The tendencies towards the coloristic effects express the medallions with gems, also in wide use since the middle of the 2nd century. These medallions, as also the decorative heads of the earrings, form the cassettes made of gold sheet, into which were inlaid the semi-precious stones, paste, gems or cameos. These cassettes can have the edge decorated with the twisted or pseudo-twisted ornament, or with the gouged or ruptured stylized palmettos. The techniques of pressing and cutting out the gold sheet become very popular, and on some types of earrings, on the decorative heads around the part where the stone is inlaid, there are rich open floral and geometrical ornaments. The most wide-spread motif, executed in the technique of fine cutting, form the radially placed triangles encircled by a single or double row of volutoid peltae.<sup>30</sup> But, this lace-like cutting out of metal, fine cutting or *opus interrasile*, otherwise a very popular technique in the Roman goldsmithing of the 3rd century, is not in wide use in the local handicraft centres. Namely, except some earrings (Fig. 5), whose decorative heads are ornamented in this technique, *opus interrasile* is used on the local jewelry just for decorating the smaller

<sup>24</sup> Popović 1996 a, cat. 122.

<sup>25</sup> Popović 1996 a, cat. 150.

<sup>26</sup> Popović 1997, 73-79.

<sup>27</sup> Popović 1999, 77-92.

<sup>28</sup> Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, cat. 38, 39.

<sup>29</sup> Zotović - Jordović 1990, 68, T.

XXXV, 2-5; 70-71, T. XLII, 8; 83, T.

XCI, 2.

<sup>30</sup> Popović 1996 a, cat. 97-100.

Fig. 5. Earrings, gold, from the unknown site

Fig. 6. Cameo with busts of Crispina (from the unknown site) and Orbiana (*Viminacium*) in gold frame

Fig. 7. Ring, gold, Veliko Gradište, *Pincum*



segments on the necklaces or on their clasps. The absence of use of *opus interrabile* technique was noticed also on the rings. Unlike Gaul, where the rings ornamented in this way are numerous, in the Danubian provinces they are represented only by the find from the Nikolaevo hoard.<sup>31</sup> In the local centres fine cutting is not used even for decorating the frame of medallion's socket, which is, otherwise, in the 3rd-4th century a popular way of decorating the monetary pendants and medallions in Gaul,<sup>32</sup> and registered also in Pannonia.<sup>33</sup> With the lace-like ornaments are very often decorated the frames of the monetary pendants, which came into use together with the medallions, and which are not numerous in the Danubian provinces. But, in that region are in fashion the medallions with cameos, most often executed in the shape of Medusa's head or of a female bust. While Medusa is in the Roman world a wide-spread motif with the apotropaic character, the appearance of a series of cameos with the female busts with the hairstyles treated with precision, stays in some way puzzling. The cameos of this type from

Upper Moesia (Fig. 6), in the medallion of without it, show the same characteristics in style as the series of cameos from Lower Moesia and Thrace. So, we may well speak of one manufacturing circle, which encompassed the region on the right bank of Middle and Lower Danube, with its centres in *Viminacium*, *Ratiaria* or *Novae*.<sup>34</sup> The cameos with the representations of the female busts, otherwise rare outside this region, were discovered also in *Romula* in Roumania and *Intercisa* in Hungary,<sup>35</sup> and according to the exceptional specimens from Bela Palanka (*Remesiana*) on which is represented the bust of Constantine's wife Fausta,<sup>36</sup> in this region their production continued also in the 4th century. If the empresses are represented on them, the purpose of these cameos can in some way be brought into connection with the activity of the local centres in the service of political propaganda. In contrast to the forms of gold jewelry mentioned above, for which in the Central Balkan region can be defined some specific qualities, the forms of the rings follow the already existing fashion in the execution of this jewelry, more or less unified on the whole territory of the Empire. During the 2nd century it becomes more massive, and some specimens, made in the 2nd-3rd century, because of their shape and weight become unsuitable for wearing. About the unpracticality of such rings, which often have angular shoulders and body decorated with channels and engravings, in the written sources is encountered a commentary that it looks as if it is designed for toes.<sup>37</sup> That fashion in the ring production slowly abates in the middle of the 3rd century, when begins the production of specimens with a thin round hoop and a cassette for stone or paste, often decorated with the grains of granulation. But, the repeated use of filigree and granulation in the second half of the 3rd century, as a reflection of imitating the elegant Hellenistic jewelry, leads to the production of rings which are only a pale copy of earlier models.<sup>38</sup> However, at this time were made also some exceptional

<sup>31</sup> Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, cat. 177.

<sup>32</sup> Brenot-Metzger 1992, cat. 17, 19, 35, 36, 78.

<sup>33</sup> Kovrig 1937, T. XXXVIII.

<sup>34</sup> Popović 1996 a, 58, 154.

<sup>35</sup> Tudor 1938, 14-19; Vágó - Bona 1976, T. XXIII; XXIV, 1.

<sup>36</sup> Popović 2001, cat. 71, 80.

<sup>37</sup> Mart., XI, 32.

<sup>38</sup> Popović 1992, 9-17; 61-67.



Fig. 8. Set of gold jewelry, Šarkamen, mausoleum crypt

specimens with the composite hoops, modeled in the forms of herms or of female busts<sup>39</sup> (Fig. 7), which testifies that the jewelry from this epoch in some cases achieves high levels of artistic handicrafts.

It could be expected that the gold jewelry, discovered in 1996 in the mausoleum at Šarkamen (east Serbia), for which it is supposed that it belonged to the mother of Maximinus Daia, will represent if not the most representative, than at least very luxurious specimens of the Roman goldsmithing from the very end of the 3rd century. Namely, in the mausoleum crypt was found a set of gold female jewelry, two earrings, three necklaces, three rings, two rings for a braid and one pendant, most probably from a necklace (Fig. 8). But it turned out that by its stylistic characteristics this jewelry relies on the tendencies which appeared in the Roman goldsmithing in the second half of the 3rd century. In the first place we have in mind the noticeable polychromy, which, as also the use of filigree and granulation, is a reflection of desire for luxurious appearance of jewelry. But, although it achieves the desired visual effect, the jewelry from Šarkamen does not contain the most representative specimens of decorations of this style. Namely, on the necklace with medallions, as also on the rings, the coloristic effect is not achieved by using the semi-precious stone, double-layered opal, but blue paste which imitates it. The tendency was to use the relatively cheap material and the simple method, although

the use and dressing of semi-precious stones in this region had a long tradition, to which bear witness the numerous finds of gems and cameos. The same conclusion can be applied to the earring whose rectangular cassette filled with the greenish paste, an imitation of emerald, as to the medallion from the chain, filled with the multicolored paste that imitates the calcedo, semi-precious stone with three layers, often used for making gems. On two rings and on the pendant in the shape of a lunula were used the techniques of big granulation and pseudo-filigree, because the gold wire executed in the form of astragalus just imitates that one executed in the filigree technique. Simplified and relatively rough use of those goldsmithing techniques is, otherwise, the characteristic of the period after the middle of the 3rd century, and it is a reflection of desire for imitating the luxurious Hellenistic jewelry. The cutting of metal is also a technique which was used on the local jewelry during the whole 3rd century, and especially in its second half. On the jewelry from Šarkamen by cutting are decorated the medallion's frames from the necklace and one ring. But, these open ornaments are, as also on the jewelry, produced in the local centres few decades earlier, reduced to the limited areas and standard motifs of triangles and stylized peltae. The double concentric rows of cut out peltae on the edges of six medallions on the necklace, just remind of real *opus interrabile*, as the blue paste in their centre imitates the multi-layered

<sup>39</sup> Popović 1992, cat. 59, 60.

opal. So, the Šarkamen jewelry by its forms and way of decoration does not bring any important innovation in comparison with the decorations produced in the local centres during the second half of the 3rd century. Only the necklace consisting of nine big medallions and eight preserved segments of gold sheet by its style and conception of execution does not rely on the existing traditions, but it indicates those tendencies which will become prominent in the Constantine's age. By its appearances it is most similar to the jewelry that wears around the neck the woman from Constantine's environment, represented on the fresco from the ceiling of the ceremonious hall in the palace in Trier.<sup>40</sup> This fact, maybe, points to the conclusion that the local jewelers, probably from the workshop in *Naissus*, at the time when the emperors were building their residences in *Dacia Ripensis* (Gamzigrad - *Romuliana*, Šarkamen), were in contact with the artisans from the imperial workshop in Trier, which is indirectly confirmed by some other objects of artistic handicraft

from the beginning of the 4th century.<sup>41</sup>

This short survey of the characteristics of gold and silver jewelry in the Roman provinces on the Central Balkans, shows that the style of execution of precious objects has been formed under the different influences in the different periods. So, we can follow the activity of local artisans who produced traditional forms of decorations, made under the strong influences from the Greek cultural circle already in the Pre-Roman time, and also the activity of the craftsmen, most probably immigrants from the East, who form their workshops in the urban centres, producing standard forms of the Roman jewelry and following the stylistic tendencies of the contemporary goldsmithing. In the beginning of the 4th century, the jewelry workshops in the cities where the emperors stayed for a longer or shorter period of time, came into the sphere of the official production, working, from time to time, for the needs of the emperor's environment.

<sup>40</sup> Popović - Tomović 1998, 293-307; Popović 2005, 59-75; Popović 2007, 88-90.

<sup>41</sup> Popović 2006/07, 191-200.



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## SAŽETAK

### ZLATNI I SREBRNI NAKIT IZ SREDIŠNJIH BALKANSKIH PROVINCIJA RIMSKOGA CARSTVA

Ivana POPOVIĆ

*Nakit izraden od zlata i srebra iskazuje tendencije općeg stila umjetničkog obrtništva u određenom razdoblju, pokazujući istovremeno i neke posebne kvalitete. U prvom stoljeću rimske prevlasti srebrni nakit na području Balkana vrlo je brojan, i mjesna proizvodnja takvih ukrasa potrajala je do sredine trećeg stoljeća. U toj proizvodnji važnu je ulogu igrala autohtona sastavnica, podrijetlom iz tradicija latenske kulture i dugih tradicija grčkog kulturnog kruga, o čemu svjedoče brojni pojedinačni nalazi i ostave srebrnog nakita. Zlatni nakit iz ovog područja bio je podrijetlom s istoka Sredozemlja, kao i neki oblici ukrasa te uporaba filigranskih tehnika i granulacije, sve do prodora helenističkog utjecaja duboko u unutrašnjost Balkanskog poluotoka. U drugoj polovici 3. stoljeća jenjava proizvodnja ukrasa autohtonog stila*

*i pojačava se proizvodnja zlatnog nakita tradicionalnih rimskih oblika i zamjetne polikromije, što je jedno od važnih obilježja kasnoantičkog nakita.*

*Učestalo pojavljivanje uobičajenih tipova rimskoga nakita pokazuje da u većim gradskim središtima možemo računati na postojanje obrtnika koji su bili vrlo vješti zlatari i koji su ponekad proizvodili predmete visoke umjetničke kakvoće. Tradicionalni oblici rimskih ukrasa, korišteni u balkanskim provincijama tijekom druge polovice 3. stoljeća, svojstveni su i zlatnom nakitu pronađenom u mauzoleju kod Šarkamena (istočna Srbija), a koji je, vjerojatno, pripadao majci Maximinusa Daiae. Međutim, neki od oblika ovog nakita najbolje se mogu usporediti s oblicima prikazanim na fresci sa stropa Konstantinove palače u Trieru.*