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## REVIEWS

- Ivan Drnić, Kupinovo, groblje latenske kulture, Katalozi i  
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Catalogues and monographs of the Archaeological Museum  
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**Ivan Drnić, Kupinovo, groblje latenske kulture, Katalozi i monografije Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu, Svezak XII, Zagreb, 2015/ Kupinovo, a La Tène Culture Cemetery, Catalogues and monographs of the Archaeological Museum in Zabreb, Volume XII, Zagreb, 2015, 219 pages, 34 figures, 46 plates, ISBN 978-953-6789-91-7.**

The 12th volume of the series *Katalozi i monografije Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* (Catalogues and monographs of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb) brings us the story of a Late Iron Age necropolis found within the boundaries of Kupinovo. The village is situated in present-day Serbia, close to the Croatian border. Ivan Drnić, the author of this book, is a curator at the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb (AMZ), responsible for the Iron Age collection of this institution.

During the late XIXth century and early XXth century, the clay extraction activity of a local brickyard led to the disturbance of a Late Iron Age gravesite. Unfortunately, no proper archaeological investigations were ever made. As a consequence, the material collected by workers was sold to different museums, mainly the AMZ and the Natural History Museum of Vienna (NHMW)<sup>1</sup>. Some of the artifacts were already published and analyzed by N. Majnarić-Pandžić

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<sup>1</sup> During the reorganizing of the so-called „Florin Medeleț Deposit” from the National Museum of Banat, Timișoara, I had the opportunity to come across a sketch-drawing made by the late archaeologist. The drawing represented a handle belonging to a possible medical kit box. The object was from Kupinovo but kept in the Museum of Szeged. Such artifacts are frequent throughout the Roman world and sometimes end up in Late Iron Age contexts, probably due to the mobility of the specialists that used them. An example that illustrates this is the discovery of a similar object, part of a medical toolbox, in the Dacian capital Sarmizegetusa (Daicovicu et al. 1957, Fig.2; Rustoiu 2004, p. 287-296). The Sarmizegetusa discovery is dated in the first century A.D., however, by this time, the region where the Kupinovo necropolis is situated would have already been integrated within the Roman Empire. Thus, the discovery of such an item might signal the existence of an early Roman settlement in the area.

in 1970<sup>2</sup> as well as others, but it is the merit of I. Drnić to gather the entire material in one publication. Such work combines the thorough studying of the typological and chronologic aspects or artifacts with the often uneasy job of sorting the museum deposits, browsing archives and identifying the objects of study. It is these efforts that are acknowledged by Jacqueline Belen, head of the Prehistoric Archaeology Department of the AMZ, in the preface of this volume.

The book is structured in 4 main parts, to which are added an acknowledgment section, a repertoire of finds related to some of the artifacts presented in the study and the plates with drawings of the items. Besides this, several high quality pictures of some of the artifacts from Kupinovo are scattered throughout the book. This contributes to the esthetic aspect of the paper, but also allows the reader to analyze some of the details found on the items presented (stamped sword blades or decorations placed on different objects).

The introduction chapter starts with a brief overview concerning the La Tène period, particularly in southeastern Pannonia. In this excursus, I. Drnić discusses some of the "hot" topics concerning the spreading of the La Tène culture (migration and identity) and the chronology of the Late Iron Age. Through this synthesis, the author manages to contextualize the necropolis from Kupinovo, within the broader cultural picture of the Carpathian Basin. The second part of the introduction brings us the story of how the items from Kupinovo ended up scattered in different museums. It also provides a brief review of the studies that mentioned some of these artifacts before.

The most consistent part of this monograph is the second chapter, in which the artifacts are presented and thoroughly analyzed. I. Drnić tries to compensate the lack of context with an abundance of analogies from other sites that benefited from

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<sup>2</sup> Majnarić-Pandžić 1970, p. 25-33, p. 81-86, Pl. IX-XIX.

a better archaeological research. For dating and interpretation, he relies mostly on similar pieces from the neighboring areas but does not exclude analogies from more distant territories.

The most important category of artifacts recovered from Kupinovo is comprised of weapons. This could be owed to the fact that these items were the most easy to recognize by workers employed at the brickyard. The weapon assemblage includes offensive weaponry (swords, spearheads, knives), as well as defensive items (shield bosses). The study relies mainly on the works of A. Rapin<sup>3</sup> și T. Lejars<sup>4</sup> for typological analysis. From a chronological point of view, the armament unearthed at Kupinovo covers a timespan ranging from the B2 phase of the La Tène period, until the D2 phase. Most of the military equipment can be dated to the middle La Tène period (LTC1-C2). The author reserves a special treatment for some particular type of weapons like the sword with anthropomorphic hilt, or the stamp decorated blades. The morphologic evolution of weapons also reveals an evolution in fighting techniques. Drnić considers that towards the end of the Late Iron Age, a shift from infantry fighters to horseback riders can be noticed. This discussion is continued during the analysis of the sole harness equipment recovered from the necropolis. The author considers that along with this fighting evolution, appeared a new social stratification within the warrior elite. The top echelon can be recognized from their use of horses and helmets, while the lower warrior class relied mainly on spears.

Another type of equipment linked with the military elite is the sword chain. Several types of sword chains have been unearthed at Kupinovo. These kinds of artifacts are relevant for chronological issues, but also show markers of external influences adopted by the La Tène craftsmen<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Rapin 1988; Rapin 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Lejars 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Rustoiu 2006, p. 215.

The use of body beautification, as a mean of differentiating between social strata, is discussed when analyzing the only toiletry instrument recovered from the necropolis, namely a razor. Toiletries are generally attributed to male graves, their presence in graves being considered as a way of differentiating the warrior class ever since the emergence of these elite in the Bronze Age<sup>6</sup>. During the Late Iron Age, toiletries are often associated with male warriors, but are also found in graves without weapons, sometimes belonging to women<sup>7</sup>.

Although not very numerous, the garment accessories found at Kupinovo offer valuable information concerning the chronological evolution of the necropolis as well as the local particularities of this community. The typological and chronological analyses were done using mostly the works of J. Bujna<sup>8</sup>. The most significant garment accessories are the local variants of the Duchcov-type fibula, generally dated in the B2 phase of the La Tène period, as well as the bracelets and brooches with pseudo-filigree and pseudo-granulation decoration. These artifacts are specific for the eastern La Tène milieu and are a result of influences coming from Greek and Thracian craftsmen.

Another category of objects that reflects the Hellenistic influence over the La Tène community from Kupinovo are the pseudo-kantharos vessels. These are local imitations made under the influence of Greek culture and are spread throughout the entire Carpathian Basin during the La Tène period.

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<sup>6</sup> Treherne 1995.

<sup>7</sup> The custom of placing toiletries in graves varies from one community to another. For instance, at Maňa, toiletries are mostly associated with non-warrior graves (Benadik 1983). At Mannersdorf, the same types of toiletries are found both in warrior graves and female graves (Ramsl 2011). There are however cemeteries in which these kinds of artifacts are most commonly associated with the warrior elite (Ljuština, Spasić 2016). It is therefore very likely that burial customs had certain particularities that differ from one community to another and the symbolism of toiletries found in graves requires a more thorough investigation.

<sup>8</sup> Bujna 2003; Bujna 2005.

The third chapter of the book illustrates the author's interpretation concerning the cemetery from Kupinovo. It is structured in three parts. The first one deals with the chronology of the finds. Using a comparative method, I. Drnić concludes that the necropolis was used between the B2 and D2 phases of the La Tène period. An interesting aspect is the presence of LTC2 finds, which, until this point, are unique in South-Eastern Pannonia.

The second part of this chapter investigates the funerary rites and rituals practiced by the community from Kupinovo. This is a bold attempt, considering that there is no information about the archaeological context. However, I. Drnić manages to draw some important conclusions regarding this aspect. The practice of cremation is proven by burn marks found on several items, while a skull, found in the collections of the Museum of Zagreb and several items that are generally found in inhumation graves, suggest that such rite was also practiced by the community from Kupinovo. Rituals, such as animal offerings and weapons destruction are also documented.

The last part of this chapter analyses the cultural affiliation of the cemetery. On this occasion the author goes on a brief survey concerning the La Tène period in the Carpathian Basin. In this way, he tries to integrate the finds from Kupinovo within the broader cultural picture of this period.

In the conclusions chapter, I. Drnić brings out some of the issues that affect the research of the Late Iron Age in the Southern Pannonian region. The most significant are the lack of clear archaeological context for the vast majority of finds. Another aspect pointed out is the lack of bioarchaeological studies and other related sciences, which are absolutely necessary in modern archaeological investigations.

The monographic study of the necropolis from Kupinovo represents a bold attempt to extract the maximum amount of information, from a site that unfortunately, didn't have the best

of faiths. The thorough investigation of the museum archives as well as the detailed analysis of the artifacts recovered, gave us a more complete insight of what could have been one of the most important necropolis of the Late Iron Age in Southern Pannonia.

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