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New perspectives of the tumuli burials during the Iron Age in the Republic of Macedonia

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Abstract: The Early Iron Age in R. Macedonia (10th to the beginning of the 8th century BC) was a period of unclear and undefined cultural values for these communities which were influenced by the new waves of the Transitional period. Yet, besides these influences, local communities also developed their own specific and characteristic appearances in the material culture. There is the obvious influence of the local Bronze Age culture, mixed with the northern elements of Hallstatt cultures from the western Balkan regions. Some of these elements existed for only a short time during the Transitional period and disappeared leaving no trace of their further development. The elements that were accepted were adapted to the local tastes (and needs) of the Iron Age communities, thus becoming incorporated into and recognizable parts of the local Iron Age culture. All of these elements present specific manifestations of the Early Iron Age culture in R. Macedonia, bringing it closer to the northern and north-western Iron Age cultures in the Balkan Peninsula. One of the most specific cultural phenomena of the Early Iron Age is the burial under tumuli. This was a new burial practice derived from the new way of life and new social relations in society. In this way, these burials, known as clan tumuli, played a major role in the appearance and the development of the Early Iron Age in Macedonia.

Key words: tumuli burials, Early Iron Age, tumular cemeteries, burial practice, burial rituals, “clan” tumuli, “family” tumuli, central grave, cist grave, matt painted pottery

Introduction

The Late Bronze Age development on the territory of the R. of Macedonia is a unique phenomenon, where the southern, i.e. Mycenaean, and the northern Balkan influences are clearly visible, as they were incorporated in many segments of the material culture, such as the pottery, jewellery, and weaponry (Figure 1). These influences were especially manifested in the regions' main communication route, such as the Vardar River Valley. While the southern influences assisted in the establishment of, for instance, the Ulan-ci (Povardarie) cultural group,² the influences coming from the north caused its destruction.³ The Ulan-ci group was characterised by deeply canonised burial rites and material culture as

well as openness towards the Aegean. Warrior burials have not been discovered, and the lack of weapons in the wider context of the Ulan-ci cultural group speaks for the absence of destructive processes until its end,⁴ which is associated with invasions from the north. This indicates that the local communities along the valley of River Vardar were not affected by the first wave of the so-called “Great Aegean migrations”, which happened at the end of the 13th through the early 12th century BC. After the fall of the Mycenaean civilisation in the south, many of Bronze Age cultur-

¹ Archaeological Museum of Macedonia – Skopje

² Videski 2004, 43–46; Митревски 2013.

³ Mitrevski 2007, 444–445.

⁴ Videski 2004, 90–97. In general, male burials at Dimov Grob, Ulan-ci were presented with a unified personal set consisting of a knife, a needle, and a sharpener, but there was no single grave with weapons. First weapons (four socketed axes and head of a spear) appeared at the very end of the 12th century BC at Manastir, Čaška near Veles.

al elements continued to exist in the mainland to the north of the Mycenaean core.⁵

The peaceful life of the communities in the Late Bronze Age was disturbed by turbulent events associated with migrations from the north to the south in the second half of 12th century BC, and the territory of the R. of Macedonia played an important role during these movements.⁶ The best evidence for these turbulent times comes from the settlements along the Vardar River valley, which suffered large and frequent conflagrations as well as total destruction, including at sites of Manastir near Veles⁷ and Vardarski Rid near Gevgelija.⁸ The strong foreign influence is detectable by the appearance of new finds in the burnt layers at the settlement of Stolot near Ulanci or Manastir – Čaška, unknown till then in the material culture. Excavated material at these sites fits chronologically and typologically to the latest burial phase at the necropolis of Dimov Grob near Ulanci or the older horizon of burials at Mali Dol in Tremnik.⁹ It can be confirmed that the same situation seems to be applicable at Vardarski Rid near Gevgelija, where the community moved to a safer location at the neighbouring hill Kofilak after the destruction of the original settlement.¹⁰ One further illustration of the devastation can be found at Manastir, Čaška near Veles, where in the ruinous layer four bronze socketed axes (typical objects with northern origin dated to the 12th century BC) were found.¹¹ The destruction of the Late Bronze age settlements was best documented by the burnt layers at low-lying Vardar settlements, such as Kastanas (layers

11 and 12), Vardino, and Vardarophtsa, with the stratigraphy that included up to four layers damaged by fire followed by signs of recovery of the settlement.¹² At the same time as the destruction of the settlements, the necropolises of Ulanci group fell out of use. New necropolises and new way of burials utilising cremation appeared at that time in the area from Hipodrom near Skopje and Mali Dol – Tremnik up to Gynaikokastro near Kilkis.¹³ The new cultural elements from the north (e.g., pottery, terracottas, and the use of cremation as burial ritual that will have survived in the Protogeometric period), can be easily traced in the area of the Danube, through the Moravian and the Vardar regions down south to the Peloponnese.¹⁴

Late Bronze and Early Iron Age tumuli burials

1. General information about the tumuli in Macedonia

The appearance and the development of tumulus cemeteries on the territory of the R. of Macedonia is one of the most distinctive phenomena of the Early Iron Age. They appeared during the transitional period from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age, representing the societal and social complexities of the Early Iron Age communities. In general, the appearance of tumuli in Macedonia is a novelty, although this type of funerary practice has been known in the Balkans since the Early Bronze Age (BrA according to Reinecke's chronology), having originated in the Caucasus and the Eastern European steppes.¹⁵ Their development in different regions indicates different values, which depended on the particular level of the social and economic development of each community. According to some authors, their appearance was considered to coincide with the so-called third wave of the Aegean migrations.¹⁶ However, on the territory of Macedo-

⁵ Mitrevski 2007, 447.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Papazovska 2015, 63–65; Jovcevska 2008, 14–15. 23. The investigator in her published results determined the site to be a necropolis from the transitional period from the Bronze to the Iron Age. By coordinating the stratigraphy and the description of the layers in the monograph, we can conclude that the excavated layers belonged to a settlement. Some attributed of the published material suggests the type of the settlement and the manner of manufacture of the objects. All elements show that Manastir – Čaška was a single period settlement from the end of the Late Bronze Age, which was then burnt and destroyed completely.

⁸ Videski 2005, 19–22.

⁹ Mitrevski 1997, 44; Papazovska 2018, in print. More information about the necropolis of Mali Dol in Tremnik will be published in *Macedoniae Acta Archaeologica* 21.

¹⁰ Videski 2005, 91–113.

¹¹ Ibid.; Jovcevska 2008.

¹² Papazovska 2015, 72–73. See also Hochstetter 1984, 345–350; Hänsel 1989, 363–367.

¹³ Savvopoulou 1988, 306–312; Mitrevski 1994, 115–124; Papazovska 2018.

¹⁴ Diamond 1988, 153–159; Mitrevski 2007, 448.

¹⁵ Garašanin 1983, 264–266.

¹⁶ Mikulčić 1966, 21; Mitrevski 1997, 63–64.

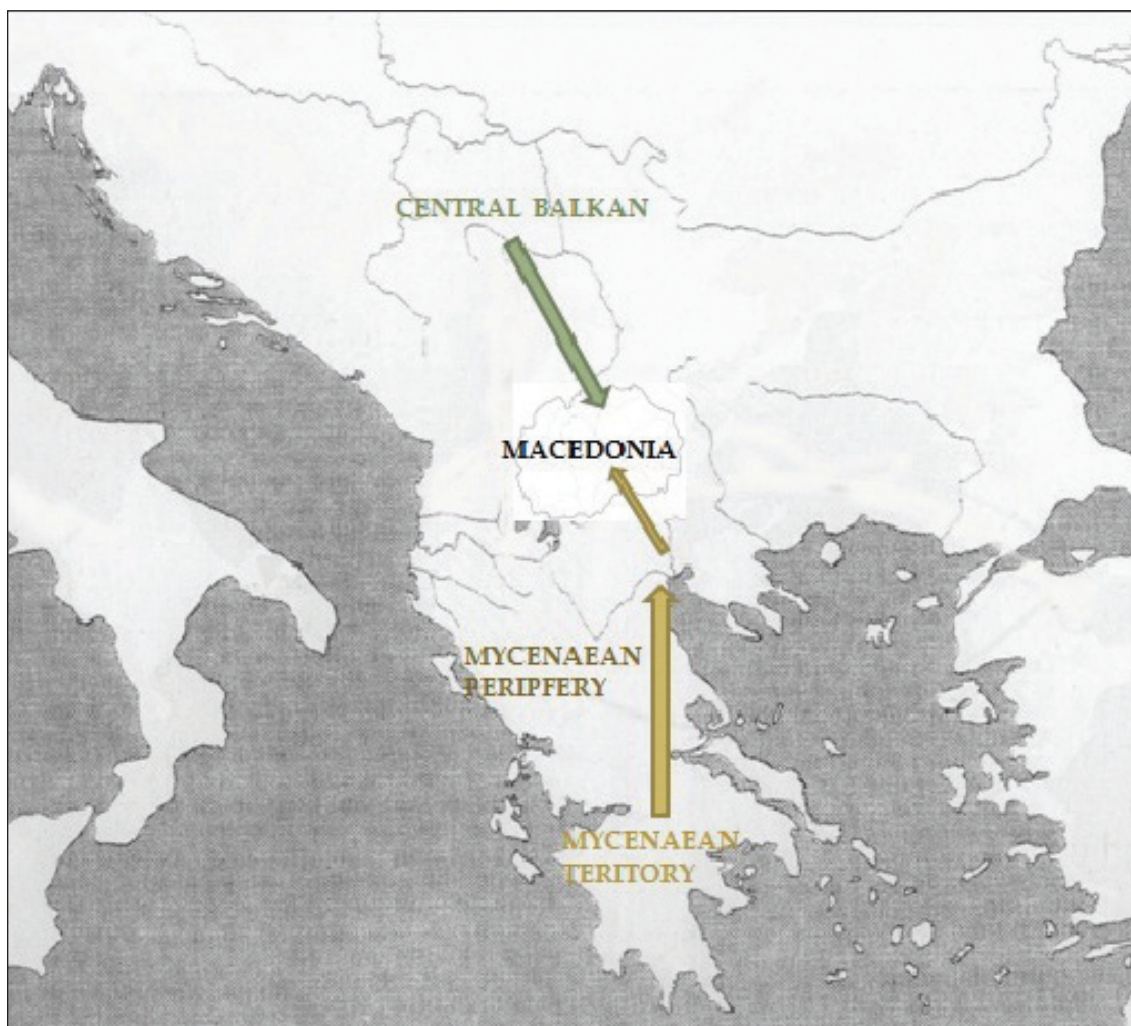


Figure 1: *Cultural influences from the north and the south (Aegean) in the Late Bronze Age in R. of Macedonia* (map by author)

nia and in South Epirus we encounter an earlier appearance of the tumuli during the transitional Late Bronze to Early Iron Age period.¹⁷ Finds typical for the transitional period are Liburnian fibulae¹⁸ and a Pesciera type fibula from Demir Kapija,¹⁹ phalerae or flange hilted swords²⁰, all pointing to 11th century BC. Besides these, there

is also a presence of local matt painted pottery of the Ulanci group from the Late Bronze Age or the spectacle fibulae, which have been found in the earliest burials.

Another problem related to tumulus cemeteries is the question of their character and development. Tumuli are a new burial practice, conditioned by the new lifestyle and societal and social relations. A very important feature of the tumuli is their position in relation to the environment. In particular, special attention was given to the selection of dominant locations in the area.²¹

¹⁷ The earlier appearance of tumuli was during the transitional Late Bronze to Iron Age period, namely the central grave in the tumulus at Visoi near Bitola, the central grave in the tumulus at Strnovac near Kumanovo, and the newly excavated tumulus in Kršla near Vinica.

¹⁸ Mitrevski 1997, 306. 316, Cat. No. 50–51. 67. We found several finds of this type of fibulae on the territory of Macedonia in Popadin Dol, Prilepec, Trojaci, Demir Kapija, Lakavica, Karanka – Rapeš, Vergina, and Pateli.

¹⁹ Korošec 1956, 104–105.

²⁰ Finds from tumulus in Beranci; Mikulčić 1966.

²¹ Their position was the main reason for re-using the tumuli as burial grounds in the later periods, especially during the Roman period and sometimes even in the Middle Ages, such as in the case of the tumuli at Stragata in Krushevit-sa – Prilep or the Tumulus I in Visoi, Beranci. This may

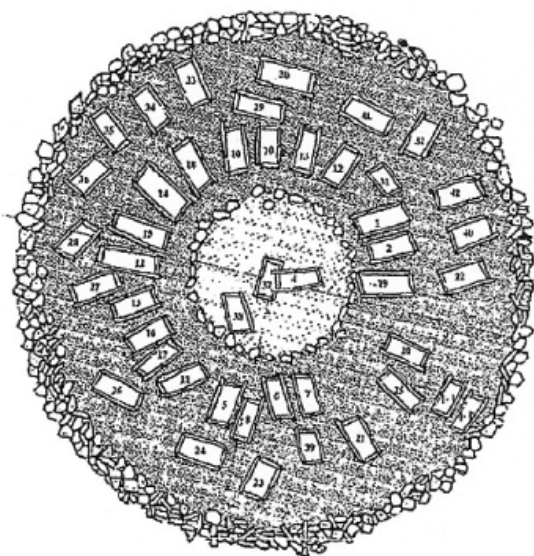


Figure 2: *Tumulus I, Visoi, Beranci*
(Mitrevski 1997, Fig. 26)

This paper is a result of the analysis of burial rituals at the end of the Bronze Age and during the Early Iron Age with an emphasis on the tumulus cemeteries. The data for the analysis came from ten tumuli excavated during the last fifty years on the territory of R. of Macedonia,²² and include information on their structure and archaeological finds.²³ To stress the underlying premise again, the development of the tumuli necropolises on the territory of the R. of Macedonia, as well as in South Epirus²⁴ and Northwest Greece²⁵ reflects societal and social relations at that time.

In terms of the character and the manner of construction, two types of tumulus cemeteries can be distinguished. The cemeteries of the earlier type are associated only with the Early Iron Age, and are typologically, chronological-

ly, and culturally distinguished as a group of the so-called “clan” or “tribal” tumuli, while tumuli cemeteries of the later type are associated with the Late Iron Age, and are typologically, chronologically, and culturally distinguished as a group of the so-called “family” tumuli.²⁶

The clan or tribal tumuli are characterised by multiple burials under a single mound, enclosed with single circular wall made of relatively large stones. The most characteristic feature of this type of tumuli is the division of the central space with an additional ring of stones covered with an earthen mound as a separate tumulus, which indicates the central grave. In most cases, the burial in the central grave was the oldest one, as was the case of the tumuli at Strnovac, Visoi – Beranci, Petkov Dol, and Mojno, for example. The burial rite in the central grave, a crouched inhumation, differs from the secondary burials within the mound. The central burial from the tumulus at Visoi dates to the Submycenaean period,²⁷ and the secondary burials in this tumulus were radially arranged around the central grave, with their heads turned towards it. It is believed that the deceased in the central grave was the founder or the father of the community. This type of tumulus with a mound formed first over the central grave followed by the rest of the graves covered with a larger mound is called “double tumulus”. To this type belong the mounds at Visoi – Beranci and the newly discovered tumuli at Čanishte and Kruševica in Mariovo as well as the tumuli in Strnovac near Kumanovo.²⁸

The tumulus at Visoi – Beranci (Figure 2) shows certain similarities with the mounds in the famous cemetery at Vergina, including architecture and grave customs. At the same time, Visoi – Beranci tumuli represent one of the oldest Early Iron Age tumuli in Macedonia of the so-called clan or tribal type. On the other hand, it is clear that the features and the manner of construction of the tumuli reveals multiple elements of the Mycenaean grave architecture, such as the use of grave circles and cist graves. These elements deeply influenced not only the character of the Iron Age tumuli, but also their social, societal,

be associated with the appearance of the cult of ancestors among the local populations, but this suggestion remains unclarified due to the low level of research.

²² Visoi – Beranci, Karanka – Rapeš and Petkov Dol – Mojno near Bitola, Orlova Čuka – Štip, Stragata – Caniste and Barata in Mariovo, Strnovac and Vojnik near Kumanovo, Ograda – Orešani, Przali – Varvara near Skopje.

²³ The analysis was made during the research for the author’s doctoral thesis entitled “The Early Iron Age in Macedonia” defended at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje on December 25, 2015.

²⁴ Andrea 1976; 1985; Korkouti 1981; Bejko 2002, 171–198; Aliu 2004.

²⁵ Andronikos 1969; Vokotopoulou 1982; 1986.

²⁶ Митревски 2013, 220–224.

²⁷ Mikulčić 1966, 14–15; Andronikos 1969; Mitrevski, 1997, 103; Papazovska Sanev 2014, 15, Fig. 6.

²⁸ Mitrevski 1997, 88–110; Mitkoski 1999; Stankovski 2006, 93–114; Mitkoski 2010, 60–62.

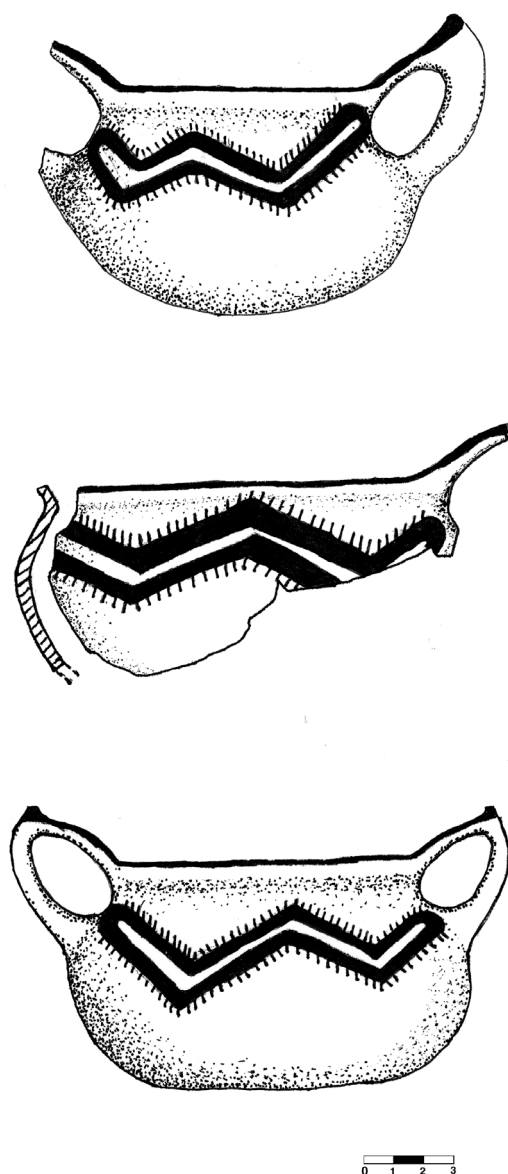


Figure 3: *Local matt painted pottery, Ulanci, Gradsko*
(drawing by Z. Videski)

and religious meaning. In the Late Bronze Age, the inhumation in a cist was established as a sole grave form in the tumuli and cremation vanished from the entire region of Macedonia down to Thessaly. The reappearance of cists with other forms of individual burials in the Early Iron Age (10th–9th centuries BC) indicates the strengthening of the local values of the Bronze Age.²⁹

The tumuli in the R. of Macedonia are a social category and a cultural phenomenon, in

which the so-called tribal or clan type played a significant role in the establishment and development during the Early Iron Age. This type of necropolis contained one to three tumuli, each with more than ten burials, mainly in cists and always with a central grave around which all other graves were organised. The whole tumulus was enclosed with stones and the mound was made by piling mixed earth and stones. Sometimes the central grave had a separate mound and a stone ring, and the burials in this central grave comprised the so-called “double tumulus type”,³⁰ which were the earliest burials. The appearance of double tumuli in Macedonia might be due to a cultural breakthrough or alternatively according to some authors due to population movements from Southeast Albania, where this type of burial practice was used during the Bronze Age.³¹ The later opinion, however, does not seem to hold, as previously outlined. These reasons primarily include the manifestations typical of the Late Bronze Age culture known as the Ulanci group. The matt painted pottery (Figure 3, 4) and the burials in crouched inhumation are common for the group and point to the continuity of the traditions of communities from the Bronze into the Iron Age, even though the communities adopted some new elements into their burial customs, such as the burying under low earthen or stone mounds. This consistency is evident in the material culture, especially in pottery, which shows continuity from the Late Bronze Age with some changes with gradual introduction of new shapes.

It is interesting to note that some grave goods provide significant data for the typological, chronological and cultural identification of the central graves. One of such examples is a fragment of a matt painted kantharos of the Ulanci type found in the central grave (Figure 4) of Tumulus I at Strnovac. This type of pottery dates in to the Bronze Age or 12th century BC. The other finds from this tumulus include monochrome pottery and fragments of channelled wares, both typical for 11th century BC.³²

²⁹ First use of cists as a grave construction on the territory of Macedonia can be traced to the Late Bronze Age necropolises of Ulanci Group.

³⁰ Hammond, 1976, 77–105; 1982, 625. 644.

³¹ Ibid. 77–105.

³² Stankovski 2006, Appendix 1. 97.

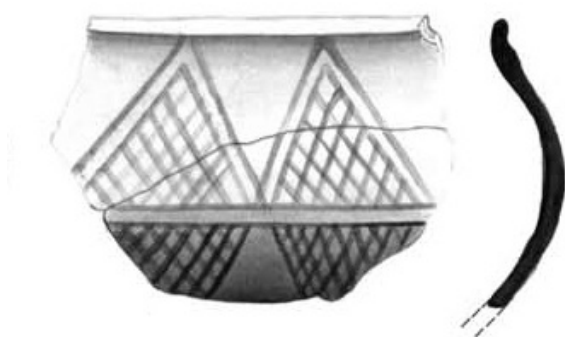


Figure 4: *Matt painted pottery – central grave, Tumulus I, Dolinac, Strnovac* (Stankoski 1999, Tab. I, 9)

2. A discussion of the best examples of the so-called clan tumuli and their significant burials

Visoi – Beranci, Bitola

The site of Visoi is located round 3 km south of the village Beranci on the shore of the Crna Reka, or the Black River, in the antiquity known as River Erigon. All together nine round tumuli were registered at a distance of around 300 to 500 m apart. First archaeological excavations here were held in the 1954 by the Museum of Bitola as the biggest tumuli with the diameter of 23 m was investigated, in which 24 burials were found organised in radially laid-out lines around the central grave. Of special importance is the central burial in form of a crouched inhumation in a cist, while the remaining burials were extended inhumations.³³

The central grave (Tomb III) in this large tumulus at Visoi – Beranci contained an iron sword, a bronze amulet in the shape of a labrys and a skyphos.³⁴ (Figure 5, 1. 3. 5) The iron sword has a flat double-sided blade and tongue-shaped handle resembling a fish tail. The swords of this type have been found in two earlier burials at the Vergina cemetery.³⁵ In terms of its length, this sword is similar to the bronze swords from of the

stage Ha A with the main distribution in central Europe while its ending in the form of a fish tail resembles the bronze swords of type Auheim.³⁶ Based on a comparison to the samples from the museum in Athens, they are dated to the LH IIIB–C, or the 13th–12th centuries BC.³⁷

The bronze pendant in the shape of a double axe (Figure 5, 3) has parallels with the samples from the Protogeometric graves at Vergina and Pateli.³⁸ A very important find for dating is a wheelmade skyphos (Figure 5, 1) with linear matt painted decoration. It belongs to the group of the Protogeometric pottery imported from the south at the end of the 10th century BC, with possible influences from Thessaly.³⁹ Based on finds from the central graves and on analogies from other sites we can conclude that the tumuli of the clan type in Visoi – Beranci appeared at the end of the 13th or in the 12th century BC and reached their final phase during the 10th century BC.

Dolinac, Strnovac – Staro Nagoričane near Kumanovo

The archaeological site of Dolinac was discovered as part of the international project at Pirajhme in 2000, when two tumuli (I and II) were registered.⁴⁰ The site is located in the village of Strnovac, around 400 m east of River Pčinja. Tumulus I was well preserved with a mound of 20 m in diameter and 1.71 m in height made by earth and small stones and an enclosed circle made of big stone blocks and smaller stones filling the space between the blocks (wall thickness ca. 0.20–0.30 m).⁴¹ In the central part of the tumulus, a central grave was discovered. The deceased was placed in a crouched position in a pit, surrounded by a stone ring with a smaller mound of stones (Figure 6).⁴² It is interesting to mention the presence of another burial in a crouched position in the central grave. The form of this additional grave, however, could not be precisely defined (it might

³⁶ Schauer 1971, 125; Mikulčić 1966, 16.

³⁷ Athens National Archaeological Museum 1017, 323, type Naue II.

³⁸ Rey 1932, Fig. 11; Andronikos, 1952, 211.

³⁹ Mikulčić, 1966, 16–17.

⁴⁰ National Museum of Kumanovo organized the archaeological excavations held in 2001.

⁴¹ Stankovski 2008, 135.

⁴² Stankovski 2006, Tab. 1. 97; Papazovska Saney 2014, 15–16.

³³ Mikulčić 1966, 14. Archaeological finds and documentation are located in the National Museum of Bitola.

³⁴ Ibid. 16, Tab. IV, 8a–c.

³⁵ Andronikos 1952, 263–264, Fig. 102.



Figure 5: *Finds from the central grave in the tumulus I, Visoi, Beranci I.* (Mikulčić 1966, Tab. IV)

have been a pit), but it was orientated NW–SE just as the first grave.⁴³ A matt painted kantharos (Figure 4) of the Ulanci type from the central grave of Tumulus I has been dated to the end of Bronze Age or to the transitional period (second half of the 12th century BC). The grave offerings in the other burials in Tumulus I date later, as they are typical for the more developed stages of the Iron Age (8th century BC).⁴⁴

⁴³ Stankovski 2008, 135–140.

⁴⁴ Ibid. Three more graves can be noticed in this tumulus and based on the grave goods they can be dated to the 8th

century BC. Similar situation with the tumulus used throughout a longer period of time can also be observed in at Stragata near the village of Kruševica (Figure 7). During the 2001 excavations, in the middle of a tumulus with a diameter of 15 m a central burial in a cist grave and several younger graves in cists graves located radially around it were excavated.⁴⁵

century BC.

⁴⁵ Mitkoski 1999, 27, Pl. 1–2.

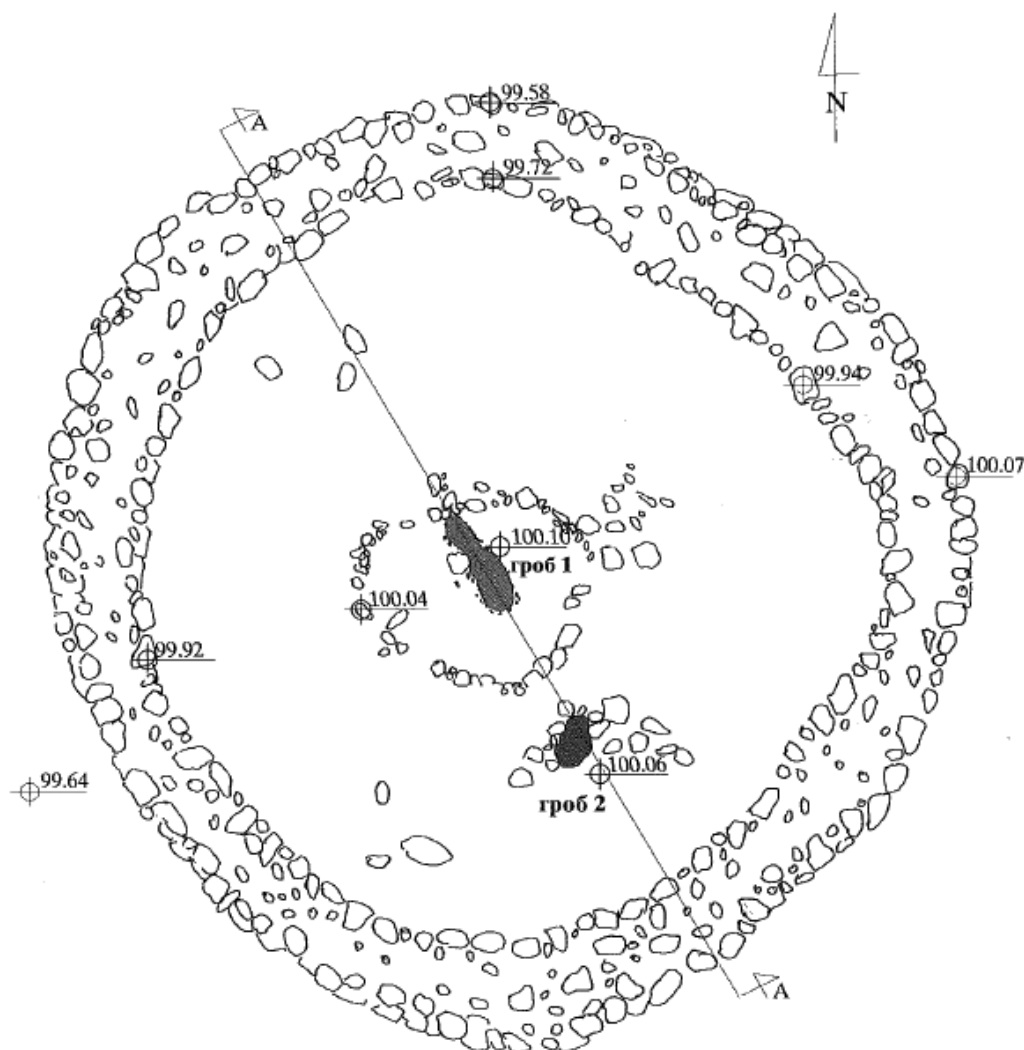


Figure 6: Tumulus I, Dolinac, Strnovac (Stankoski 1999, Fig. 1)

Barata, Čanište

The excavations in 1994 at the site of Barata located 2 km northwest of the village of Čanište revealed three tumuli. The largest one (with a mound of a diameter of 15 m and a height of 1.25 m) included nine cist graves placed radially around the central grave (Figure 8).⁴⁶ While in Strnovac and Kruševica the central grave was clearly distinguished, the burial in the central grave in Čanište represents a distinct construction with a separate mound of stones. These graves date between 11th and 10th century BC or at the beginning of the Early Iron Age. Based on the finds from other graves it can be assumed

that the tumulus in Čanište was in use until the developed Iron Age (8th century BC).⁴⁷

Przali – Varvara, Skopje

The archaeological site of Przali is located in the village of Varvara, 14 km south of Skopje on the left bank of the Markova River.⁴⁸ The necropolis was investigated in years 1995 and 2000 by the

⁴⁷ Ibid. 58–62, Pl. 3–4. In both tumuli, new burials were performed in the following periods.

⁴⁸ The archaeological excavations were conducted by the Museum of City of Skopje, but the results have not been published yet, except from an MA thesis of Kiro Ristov defended in 2004 at the Faculty of Philosophy in the Department of Archaeology in Skopje entitled “Prehistoric necropoleis in Varvara and Orešani – a picture of protohistory in the Skopje region”.

⁴⁶ Mitkoski 2010, 58–60, Pl. 3.

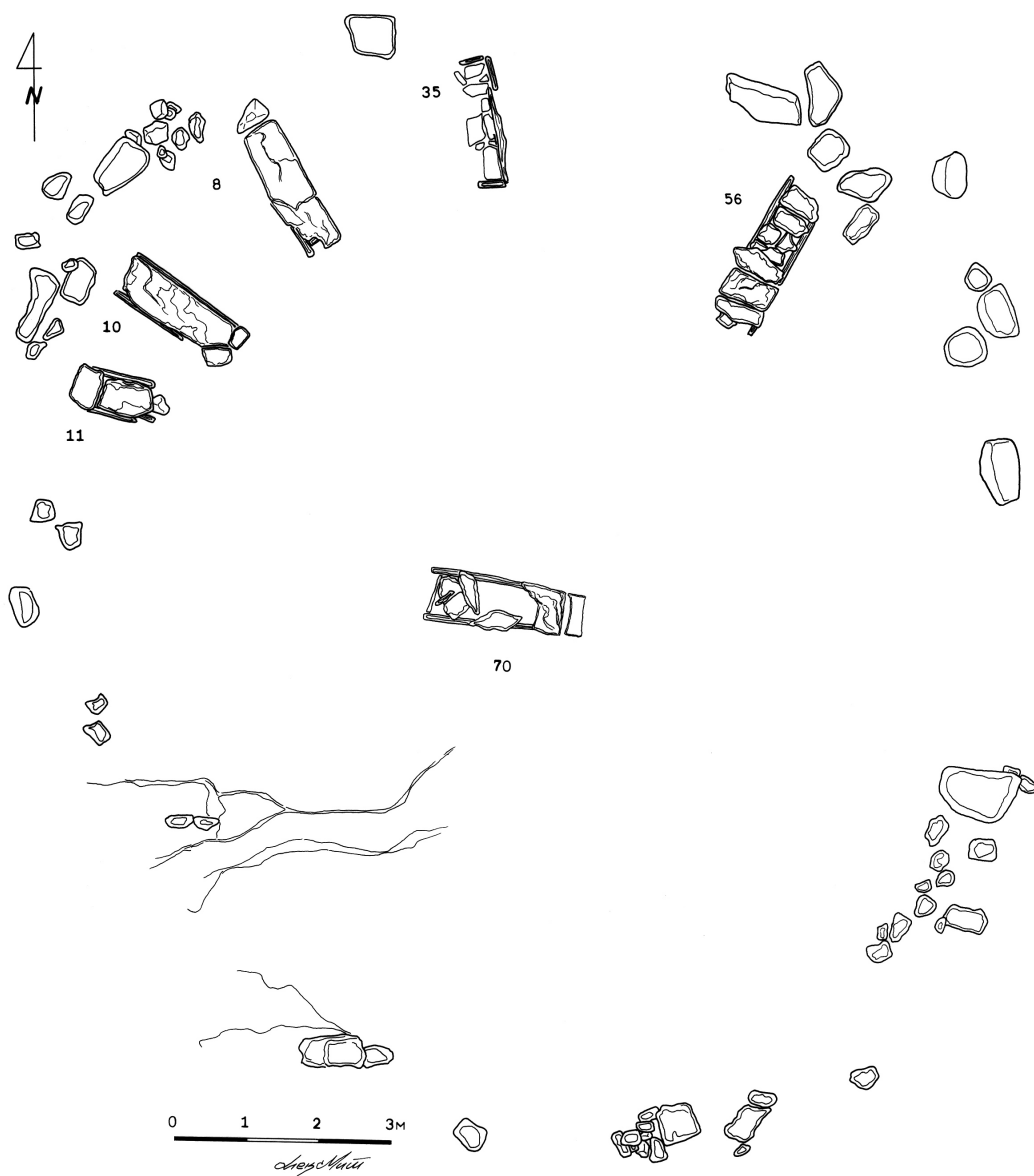


Figure 7: Tumulus, Stragata, Kruševica – Mariovo (Mitkoski, 2010, plan 3.)

Skopje city museum.⁴⁹ The limited excavations revealed a tumulus of clan type with 53 burials dating from Early Iron Age till the Roman time.⁵⁰ The tumulus was consisting of an earthen mound with a wreath of stones of a diameter of 13 m.⁵¹

3. Conclusion

It can be concluded that during the Iron Age tumuli became the favourite mode of burial practice. The development of cemetery organisation

followed the social and economic changes in the community, which was reflected in the structure of the tumuli.

The stabilisation of the Iron Age culture and the emerging social relations during the developed Iron Age contributed to the growth of communities, resulting in the population abandoning the old burial custom of the so-called clan or tribal tumuli. New organisation within the tumulus cemeteries saw new spacious necropolises with several hundred tumuli.⁵² These tumuli had the same characteristics as the earlier clan tumu-

⁴⁹ Ristov 1999, 7–12, Fig. 1–2; 2006, 16. I would like to thank Kiro Ristov for pointing it out to me.

⁵⁰ Ristov 2006, 20–21.

⁵¹ Ristov 2004, 54.

⁵² Митревски 2013, 220–224.

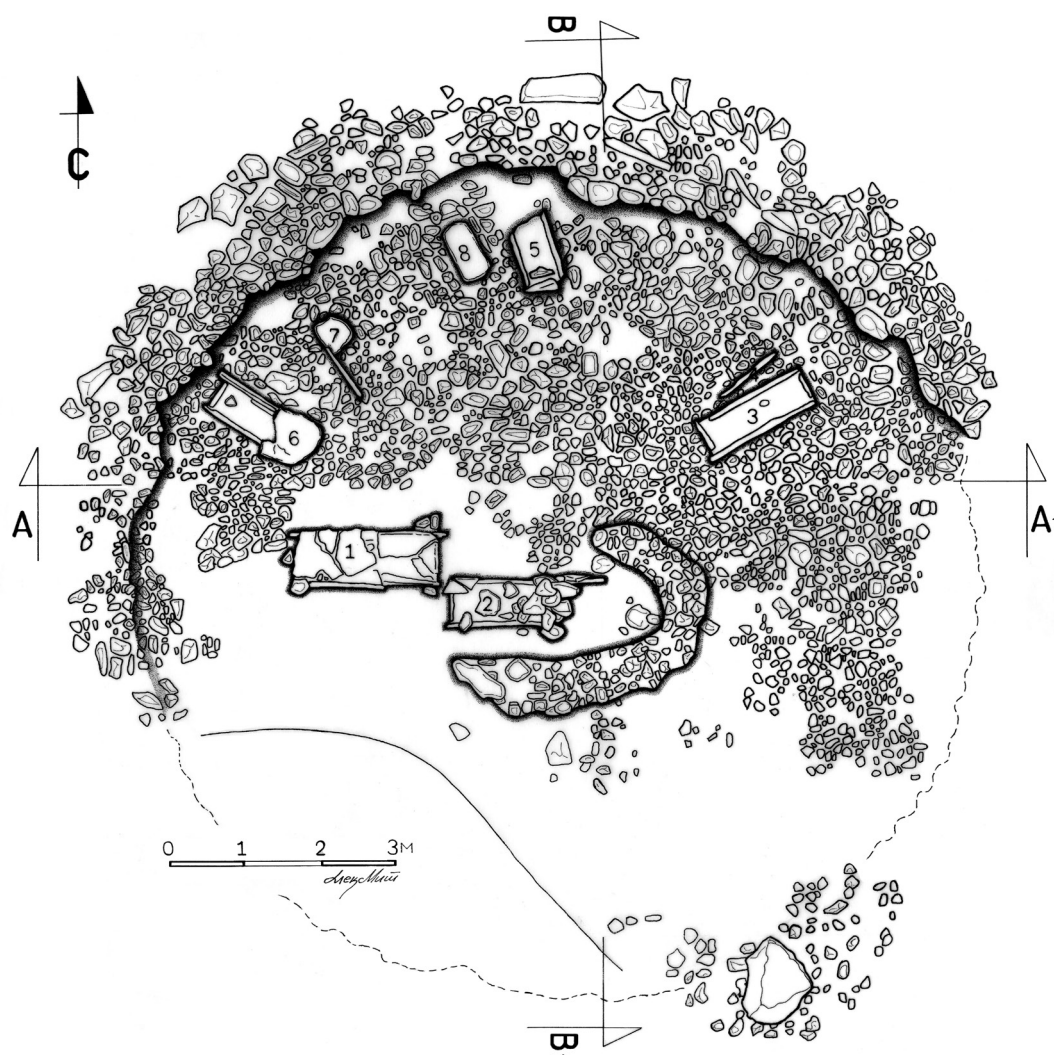


Figure 8: *Tumulus, Barata, Čanište – Mariovo* (Mitkoski, 2010, plan 4.)

li, but were of smaller dimensions and contained fewer burials. The fencing stone ring consisted of an ordinary circle of stones in a single row, and there was no central burial occupying the inner space of the tumulus. In short, the clan or tribal type of the tumulus was abandoned and the new tumuli of the so-called family character, such as at Dabici – Sopot near Veles (Figure 9), occur through the entire 7th and 6th centuries BC.⁵³

Some authors have linked this type of tumulus with the communities of conservative and livestock breeding regions, as this custom was practiced for a longer period of time there.⁵⁴ The graves of ancestors had great importance for

these communities, especially with respect to the identification of the individual with the community. With the collapse of the tribal system and the appearance of new social differentiation in the 6th century BC, tumulus cemeteries fell out of use.

In line with this conclusion, we can discard the earlier interpretations, which associated the tumulus burials and their appearance in Macedonia with foreign ethnic communities and the idea that tumulus burials appeared during the new and turbulent period of transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age. There are no special signs that the burials under tumuli belonged to people who were ethnically different from the others or who practiced this “Indo-Eu-

⁵³ Митревски 1997, 93-96.

⁵⁴ Bejko 2006, 203; Митревски 2013, 220-224.

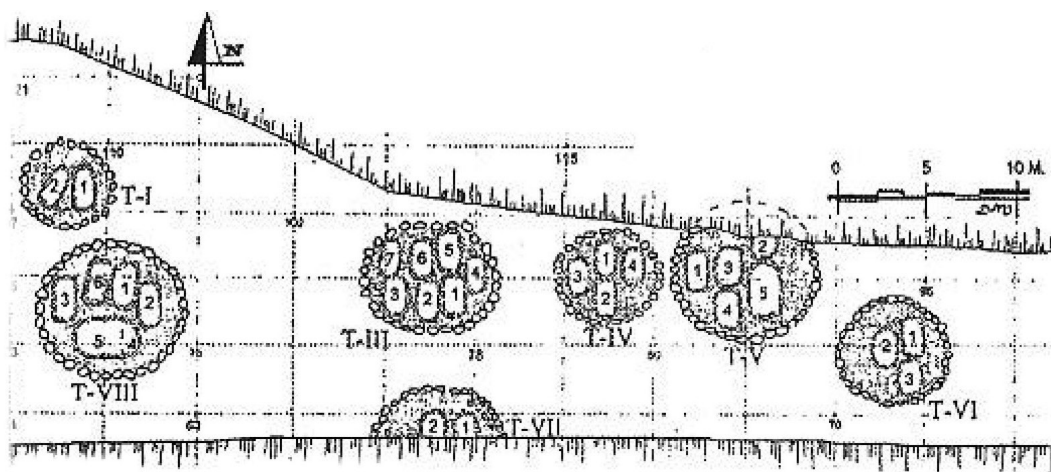


Figure 9: "Family" tumuli (Mitrevski 1997, Fig. 23)

ropean" way of burial. The developments in the period of the transition into the Early Iron Age as presented here, accompanied with the results from the research conducted in the last decades, can help us to draw out a number of key elements included in the formation of the Early Iron Age in the Republic of Macedonia. Specifically, it relies on two basic elements. First, the Early Iron Age was formed based on the preceding local Bronze Age traditions that are strongly recognisable in the local cultural group of the Vardar Valley. This cultural group (the Povardarie – Ulanci group) followed even earlier traditions, but also incorporated influences stemming from the strong relationships with the Mycenaean culture. Thus, some of the elements that are noticeable in the burial tradition are the use of cist graves and the multiple burials, which can be considered to bear Mycenaean influences.⁵⁵ The inhumation burials that had emerged in Macedonia in the Late Bronze Age continued to develop in the Early Iron Age as well.

The research on the phenomenon of tumulus cemeteries in the last decades has shown that they are a reflection of the social and economic character of the Iron Age communities. The earliest appearance of the clan tumuli can be found in the regions of Pelagonia and Skopje – Kumanovo (in the region of the Upper Vardar Valley), where they are most concentrated. If we

observe carefully the map of distribution of the so-called clan tumuli, we can see that the family tumuli are absent in this area and vice versa. The family type of tumuli is more common in the Middle Vardar Valley and in the region of Bregalnica. Moreover, they date to a much later period, the Developed Iron Age (the 7th to the first half of the 6th century BC) (Figure 10). At that time, new settlements were established as a result of the growing economic power of the communities and the development of metallurgy and the use of iron in particular. As communities had greater possibilities for the development of crafts and trade, there was a new development in spiritual culture and beliefs. The events of the Early Iron Age created conditions for a greater progress of the developed Iron Age, evident in the increased population, especially in the Lower Vardar Valley. It eventually led to the establishment of strong communities and first proto-urban centres. These centres opened a new page and paved way for new historical development.

Na engleski jezik prevele
Aleksandra Papazovska i Daniela Heilmann

⁵⁵ Snodgrass 1971, 180.



Figure 10: *Tumuli burials in R. of Macedonia* (map by autor)

Резиме

Нове перспективе сахрањивања под тумулима у гвозденом добу Македоније

Рано гвоздено доба у Македонији (од X до почетка VIII века пре нове ере) је период неоспорне културе са нејасно дефинисаним културним вредностима, на које утичу последице транзиционог периода. Гвоздено доба је специфичан феномен који се развија под различитим утицајима, али са својим специфичностима и карактеристикама које га разликују као развој локалне заједнице. У његовом формирању евидентни су утицаји из бронзаног доба, као и продор нових елемената халштатске културе са севера у транзиционом периоду. Неки од ових елемената су кратко задржани (током транзиционог периода), без проналаска основе за њихов даљи развој. Други су прихваћени и прилагођени локалном укусу и потребама

становништва, а касније су постали неодвојиви и препознатљиви дио локалне културе гвозденог доба. Сви ови елементи дају специфичне манифестације културе раног гвозденог доба у Македонији, приближавајући јужне и сјеверозападне културе на Балкану.

Сахрањивање испод тумула је посебан културни феномен који се појављује у Македонији у раном гвозденом добу, а који ће се развијати у току гвозденог доба. Дуго се сматрало да се ова појава поклапа са такозваним трећим таласом миграција Егеја, према Милојчићу и Мејеру, али на територији Македоније, чак и у јужном Епиру, проналазимо њихову ранију појаву, током транзиционог периода у XI век пре н. е.

Тумули представљају нови начин сахране, који је условљен новим начином живота, односно новим друштвеним односима. Али, оно што је константа или барем има континуитет јест сигурно материјална култура, где су неизбежне нове форме, нови утицаји, нови предмети, где керамика као централни елемент указује на континуитет из касног бронзаног доба. У сваком случају, тумули

у Македонији представљају друштвену категорију и културни феномен, где кључну улогу игра такозвани “клановски” тип тумула који је одиграо важну улогу у формирању и развоју старијег гвозденог доба.

Стабилизацијом нових друштвених односа у гвозденом добу, дошло је до пораста броја заједница чије је становништво оставило стари обичај сахрањивања у клановским тумулима. Одатле ће се формирати нова пространа и организована тумуларна некропола са стотинама тумула. У суштини, ти тумули су имали исте конструктивне карактеристике као и тумули старијих кланова, али са мањим димензијама и мањим бројем сахрањених. Прстенасти зид био је обичан круг камења у једном реду, без централног покопа, испуњавајући цео унутрашњи простор тумулуса. Тако је тумулус изгубио клановски карактер и добио нову конотацију породице (на пример некропола Дабици код Сопота у Велесу, која је била у употреби око VII и VI пре н. е.).

Овај тумуларни карактер некропола неки аутори везују углавном за конзервативне и сточарске регионе где је реално обичај сахрањивања испод тумула био у пракси дуго времена. Гробови њихових предака били су им веома значајни, посебно у идентификацији појединца са заједницом. Са распадом племенског система и са појавом изразито изражене друштвене диференцијације, у VI веку пре нове ере тумуларне некрополе су ван употребе.

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