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INFLUENCES FROM THE EAST ON THE HELLENISTIC POTTERY FROM BUDVA FROM THE GREEK COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN BELGRADE

Back in 1937, when the foundations for the hotel “Avala” were being dug in Budva, a necropolis with three levels was unearthed.¹ The uppermost and the middle levels contained cremation burials belonging to the Roman period while the lowest contained inhumations dated to the 3rd–1st centuries BC.² The cremated remains from the poor graves had been placed in clay urns, while those from the richer graves had glass urns instead, which were protected additionally by cylindrical stone urns with lids. The remains in the graves of the lowest horizon were usually buried separately (graves with two skeletons were rare), either in a constructed grave or in a sarcophagus. The grave finds from the inhumation burials included bronze weapons along with a small number of ceramics for everyday use, which could be dated to the earliest phase of settlement in Budva, the 6th–5th centuries BC. However, we have more information about the next phase of the necropolis from the period between the 3rd and the 2nd century BC. These finds belong to the period of the classical Illyrian state and the rise of Budva before it was conquered by Romans, which brought the final prevalence of Roman elements in the material culture of this region.

Besides the bronze weapons, a special place among the finds in the inhumation graves belongs to the Hellenistic gold jewellery and various types of pottery: drinking vessels (*skyphoi*, *kantharoi*, Megarean bowls); vessels for storing and serving wine (*amphorae*, *pelikae*, kraters); pouring vessels (*oinochoae*, *lagynoi*, a jug with one handle, *situlae*, Magenta vessels, and *hydriae*); oil vessels and vessels for pouring different liquids (*gutti*, *askoi*, *unguentaria*, *lekythoi*, *aryballoi*, feeder vases); vessels for food serving (plates, saucers, bowls with one handle, bowls, salt cellars); votive vessels (a *kernos*); toilet vessels (*pyxides*, *lekanai* with covers); miniature vessels, lids and moulds.



Fig. 1. *Lagynos* from Budva, National Museum in Belgrade Inv.no. 481/I.

The examination of the heterogeneous material from the necropolis in Budva, now in the National Museum in Belgrade, has shown that a great deal of the pottery has its analogies with familiar types from the necropoleis of Gostilj,³ Momišići,⁴ Ulcinj,⁵ Risan,⁶ *Apollonia* and *Dyrrhachium*.⁷ This analogy is quite understandable since we are talking about the presence of a developed civilisation that evolved under the same geographic, economic and political conditions. It is difficult to be precise about the local and imported vessel types. For part of the material, we can be cer-

¹ After the excavation in 1937 the majority of the material was moved to the National Museum in Belgrade. Smaller quantities were placed in the Archaeological Museum of Budva, the Archaeological Museum of Split (gold bracelet with snake-head terminals) and the Archeological Museum of Zagreb. Later excavations were carried out in Budva, inside the old town and necropolis, in 1952–57, 1965–67 and 1980–82, but the results are still unknown.

Since the necropolis was discovered during the construction of a hotel, the archaeological material was collected only casually. Archaeologists could not control the construction work or carry out a systematic archaeological excavation. A lot of treasure finished in private collections, or was irretrievably lost. Any documentation is lost, so it is impossible to define what belongs to which grave. ABRAMIĆ 1937, 33–41; PETROVIĆ 1939, 168–172.

² ABRAMIĆ 1937, 34.

³ BASLER 1969, 5–125.

⁴ VELIMIROVIĆ-ŽIŽIĆ 1966, 193–207.

⁵ PAROVIĆ-PEŠIKAN 2001, 335–369.

⁶ UJES 1995, 45–52.

⁷ PRENDI 1975, 154; HIDRI 2006, 64–128.



Fig. 2. Magenta vessel from Budva? National Museum in Belgrade Inv.no. 532/I.

tain that it came from Magna Graecia or from some Campanian workshops with which Budva had commercial contacts. On the other hand, one gets the impression that a great deal of the material was produced in local workshops, though its form suggests that it had its origin in Greek Hellenistic pottery.

Beside the trade connections with Southern Italy, Greece and Macedonia, we can assume that Budva made contacts with the Eastern Mediterranean as well. Some finds lead us to this conclusion, such as *lagynoi*, a jug for serving wine with sharply angular body and long, narrow, slender neck with vertical handle. Their production probably can be assigned to Cyprus⁸ (fig. 1). Also, one of the Magenta vessels (fig. 2) with a representation of female head is identical to a Cypriot find.^{8a} The archaic smile, big almond eyes, large full lips and the haircut that resembles an Egyptian hat reveal oriental influence. Magenta vessels were spread along Mediterranean area, concentrated on Cyprus, and it is assumed that their origin is from this island. You saw on the vessels which are published portraits of wives of Egyptian kings: Arsinoe II, wife of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Berenike II, wife of Ptolemy III Euergetes or Arsinoe III, wife of Ptolemy Philopator.⁹ During that period Cyprus was under the strong influence of Hellenistic Egypt and it was formed a part of the Ptolemaic kingdom. It was the last station on the trade route between the Aegean region and Alexandria.

Oriental influence is evident in the occurrence of a *kernos* composed of three small goblets with their bodies attached and with a strap-handle (fig. 3), a vessel connected to the cult of Cybele or Eleusinian Demeter.¹⁰ Also, the oriental influence is visible on Megarian bowls found in the graves: the conical bowl with vertical rim decorated with Egyptian motives – acanthi and palm trees (fig. 4), although the closer

analogies to this bowl we find at Delos;^{10a} a bowl of half-ellipsoid form with a flaring rim and three feet in the shape of shells, decorated with dolphins, the symbols of Aphrodite and Neptune, the protector of Corinth. Aphrodite in the shell is the oldest cult statuette in Boeotia, made of wood from the boat on which Kadmos, the mythical founder of Budva, arrived from *Phoenicia* to Greece (fig. 5).¹¹ The third bowl of conical shape with vertical rim bears a frieze of Nike in a biga, the motif taken from Alexander's stater (fig. 6).

It has already been mentioned that, besides the ceramics, an important component of the finds was Hellenistic gold jewellery, which is today mainly in private collections. The major part of the jewellery is produced according to Greek models but occasional finds, such as a ring with a scarab or the small ruby heads at the end of the golden necklaces, indicate a connection to the culture of Northern Africa. A lion head as a decoration on a golden, silver or a bronze object suggests the influence of *Asia Minor* through Macedonia.

The great variety of the material from the Budva necropolis, which was of varied provenance and came by various routes, proves that Budva was one big emporium that had and maintained strong mercantile relations with the Hellenic and Hellenistic world, or even that it may have been a Greek colony. It is difficult to tell with certainty whether the residents of old Budva were in constant mercantile contact with Cyprus, Egypt and *Asia Minor* or whether these finds were the property of the Greek colonists who resided in Budva.

⁸ HELLSTROM 1971, 18.

^{8a} KARAGEORGHIS/AMYX 1974, 36; 69 cat. 87 fig. 87a–c.

⁹ YON 1985, 242–248.

¹⁰ THOMPSON 1934, 447–450.

^{10a} Delos XXXI, 346 pl. 82,31223; THOMPSON 1934, C27 figs. 45b; 68,18.

¹¹ SREJOVIĆ/CERMANOVIĆ-KUZMANOVIĆ 1987, 70.



Fig. 3. *Kernos* from Budva, National Museum in Belgrade
Inv.no. 256/I.



Fig. 4. Megarian bowl from Budva, National Museum in
Belgrade Inv.no. 871/I.

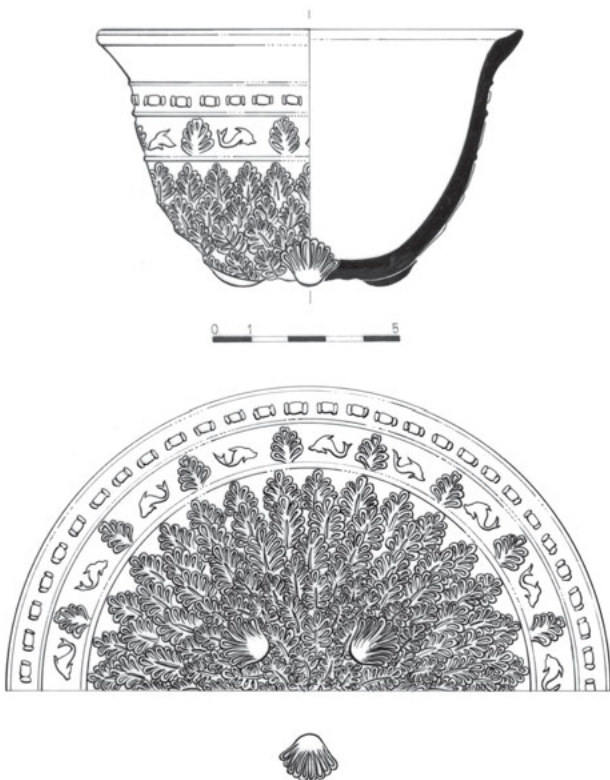


Fig. 5. Megarian bowl from Budva, National Museum in
Belgrade Inv.no. 557/I.

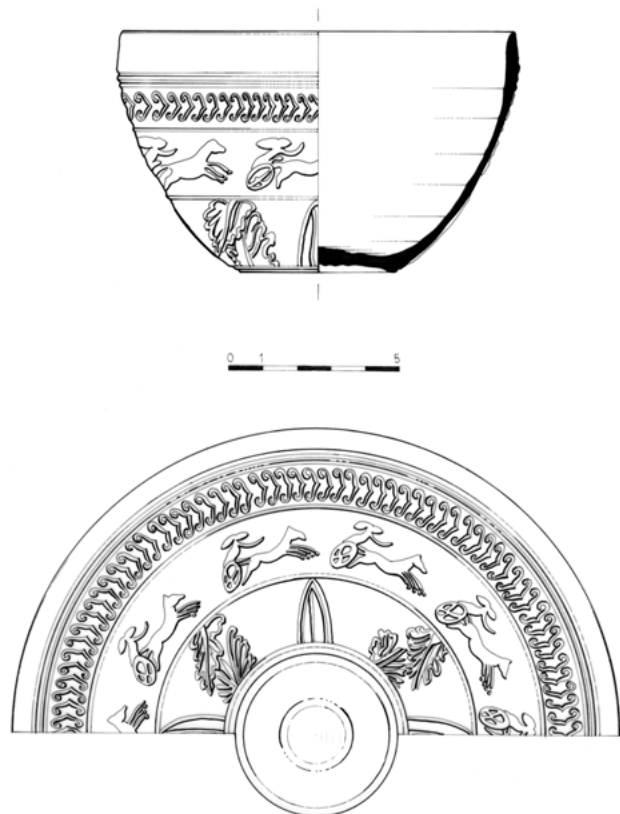


Fig 6. Megarian bowl from Budva, National Museum in
Belgrade Inv.no. 286/I.

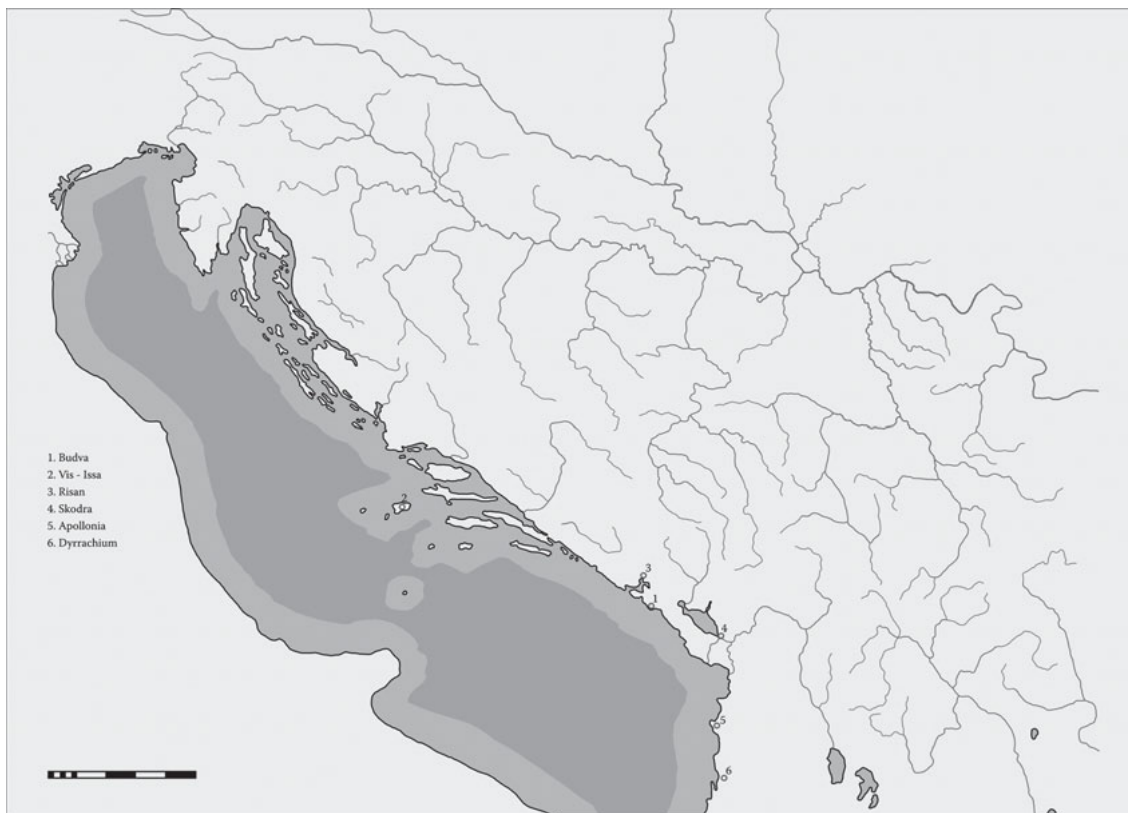


Fig. 7. Location of Budva.

Unfortunately, we do not have more any further information about the way of life in the settlement itself since the traces of the settlement have not yet been established and there are only vague assumptions about its location – on the peninsula where today the modern city lies or by the southern slopes of the hill Spas where the architectural remains of the Roman and the medieval periods are to be found. We do hope that

future archaeological surveys will give more information about this significant centre on the Eastern Adriatic coast, and thus contribute to clarification of the numerous questions about the chronology, typology and provenance of its Hellenistic ceramics, its local production and its trade routes.

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