

FINDS FROM THE LA TÈNE PERIOD FROM PODSKALIE, POVAŽSKÁ BYSTRICA DISTRICT

R A D O S L A V Č A M B A L  – M A R E K B U D A J

Several sites with rich finds are known from the area of the Púchov culture with a wide range of finds. They include a mass find from the central Považie region, from the hitherto little-known site of Podskalie, on the flank of the Veľké skaly hill in the district of Považská Bystrica. It contains two examples of a hitherto unknown, new type of belt hook, a belt ornament and a pseudo-filigree basket amulet. A key, lock spring, cramp irons and two knives were also found. Several Celtic coins in circulation on the territory of the Púchov culture also come from this site, namely the Divinka, Nitra, Veľký Bysterec types, the Slovak or Kolačno type, the Liptovská Mara and Simmering types. The hoard and the coins date the site to the late La Tène period LTD.

Keywords: Western Slovakia, late La Tène Period, Púchov culture, hoard, belt hook, Celtic coins.

The collections of the Slovak National Museum's Museum of Archaeology house an interesting set of metal objects made of bronze and iron.¹ The objects were handed over at the beginning of 2021 to the museum via an intermediary by the finder, who first published the find on the internet site LovecPokladu.cz. According to the available information, the set of items, which the finder described as a hoard, was found together in one place. It comes from the cadastral distr. of the municipality of Podskalie in the Považská Bystrica distr.² It is a find from the southern slope of the tongue-shaped promontory of the narrow Veľké skaly ridge (near the spot height of 412), just above the municipality of Podskalie in the Súľovské vrchy hills (Fig. 1).

This is a poly-cultural site, belonging to the area of the Púchov culture in the central Považie region, until now known only from the surveys of the Institute of Archaeology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences Nitra. It is known generally thanks to the illegal activities carried out there and resulting finds.

An initial survey was carried out here in 2016 in the northern part of the exposed site of Veľké skaly, the highest peak of which is Roháč (720 m a.s.l.). It was only in 2018 that an archaeological site was successfully confirmed in the southern part of Veľké skaly, that is from the southern slopes at the edge of the municipality of Podskalie towards the

north-east. According to available information, the set of items, or hoard, in question also originates from this area. The finds obtained in the survey by staff of the IA SAS in Nitra confirmed a settlement in the late La Tène period, as well as finds from the Hallstatt period, Roman times, the period of the migration of nations, the early Middle Ages and the Modern Period. However, for the moment it is not known what type of settlement it is. A hoard from the Hallstatt period originates from this site (*Benediková 2019, 136–147; 2020*). Based on obtained finds, the greatest intensity of settlement probably dates from the late La Tène period until early Roman times. Several forged iron nails, a clamp iron and a late La Tène fibula, dated to the late La Tène period originate from here (*Benediková 2019, 136–147, fig. 12*). Numismatic finds in the form of Celtic coins are also known from this site.³

COMPOSITION OF THE SET

1. Copper belt hook no. 1, entirely preserved in the form of an 'anchor', broken into four pieces. At the dividing line between the neck and the body, there is an unornamented transversal relief moulding. At the end of the belt hook there is a simple, bent hook. The neck of the belt hook between the hook and the transversal moulding does not have any ornamentation. Underneath the

¹ The objects are stored in the collections of the SNM – Museum of Archaeology in Bratislava under the registration numbers AP 97101–AP 97117.

² The authors wish to thank their colleague Mgr. Pavol Jelínek, PhD., and Štefan Chren for information concerning the finds.

³ The authors wish to thank their colleague Mgr. Lucia Benediková, PhD., from the Institute of Archaeology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Nitra (AÚ SAV Nitra) for information about the site, on unpublished finds of coins and their localisation on the site.

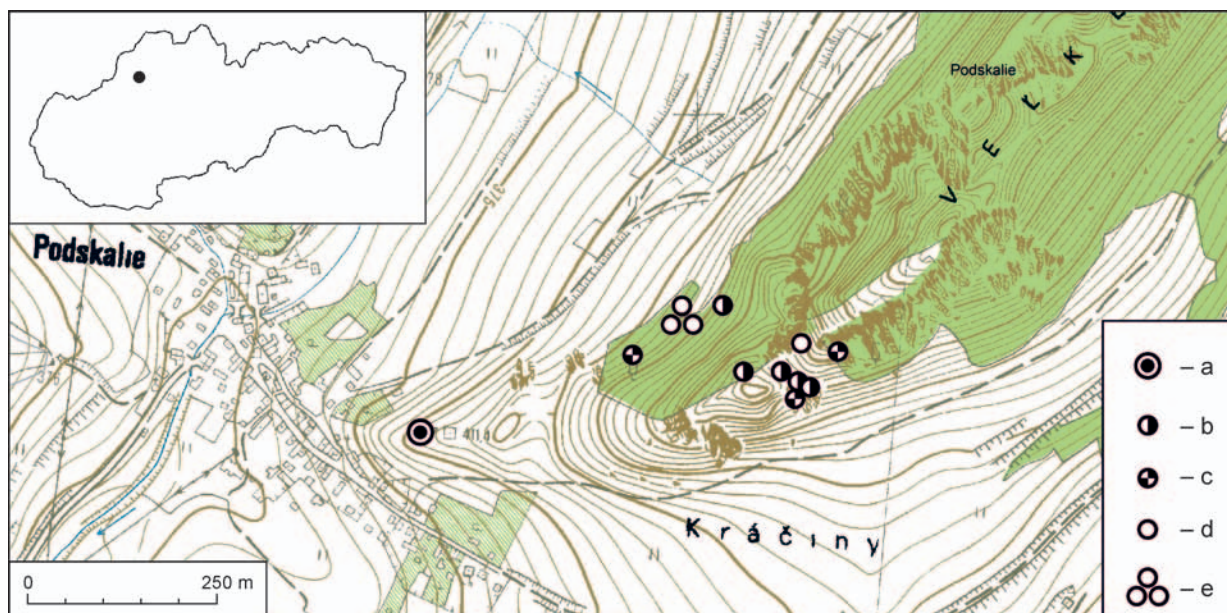


Fig. 1. Podskalie, Považská Bystrica distr. Section from a map indicating the site of the find of the La Tène hoard and Celtic coins. Legend: a – hoard; b – coins Divinka type; c – coins Veľký Bysterec type; d – coins Nitra type; e – hoard of Nitra type.



Fig. 2. Podskalie. Detail of the ornamentation on belt hook no. 2. 1, 3 – punching on the ridge of the hook and grooves on the transversal moulding; 2 – punched ornamentation in the form of circles and triangles by the transversal ridge; 4, 6 – notched ornamentation of the belt hook no. 1 (4 – of the edge of the body; 6 – of the arm); 5 – punching on the edge of the body of the belt hook in two rows (photo by R. Čambal).

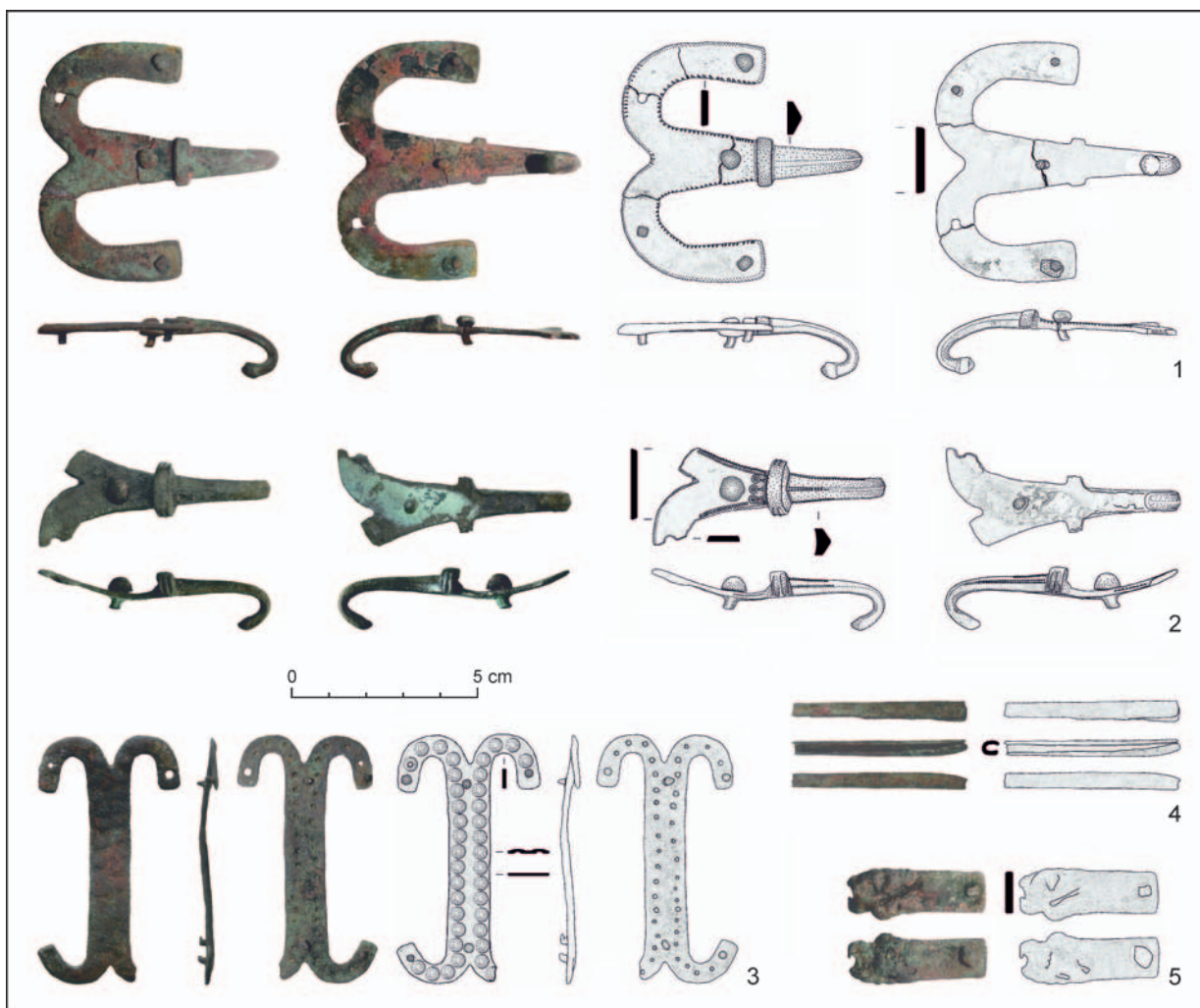


Fig. 3. Podskalie. Part of the belt accessories from the hoard. 1 – belt hook no. 1 (copper); 2 – belt hook no. 2 (brass); 3 – belt ornamentation; 4 – bronze moulding; 5 – arm of the belt hook no. 2 (drawings and photo by R. Čambal).

transversal moulding, in the centre there is a preserved rivet with a low, oval head. The edges of the metal plate are also decorated with short serratures placed close together from the transversal moulding along the outside of the inner edges of both plate arms in a U-shape (Fig. 2: 4, 6). In the central part of both arms there is a hole, or a hole with a rivet. Both arms end in a quadratic shape, and before the end there is a rivet. Dimensions: l. 6.4 cm, w. 6.5 cm, thickness of metal plate 1–1.25 mm (Fig. 3: 1; reg. no. AP 97101).

2. Brass belt hook no. 2 in the shape of an 'anchor'. The lower part in the form of arms is missing. At the dividing line between the neck and the body there is an ornamented transversal relief moulding with two transversal grooves on the sides (Fig. 2: 1–3); on the upper surface, the grooves are missing as a result of the wear and tear of the surface. At the end of the belt hook, there is a simple bent hook. Between the hook and the transversal moulding, on the edge of the neck and on the sides, there is ornamentation in the form of double lines of indentations (Fig. 2: 1, 3). The transversal moulding on the back is fringed by one row of small circular

punches. Behind them, there are three larger circular punches, from which triangles emerge towards the transversal moulding (Fig. 2: 2). The edges of the metal plate part are also ornamented with punching in two rows (Fig. 2: 5). In the middle there is a preserved rivet with a semi-globular head. In the part of the left arm of the belt hook, there is a hole for a rivet in the middle of the broken arm. Dimensions: l. 6.5 cm, w. > 2.8 cm, thickness of the metal plate 1 mm (Fig. 3: 2; reg. no. AP 97102).

3. Brass rectangular metal plate with rivet, ending quadratically at one end, on the other end melted down and deformed. It is probably the arm of belt hook no. 2 (Fig. 3: 5; reg. no. AP 97103).
4. Decorative forging made from copper plate in the shape of a letter 'X', with the ends bent on both sides in the shape of a letter 'U'. The surface is decorated on the surface with small embossments, with four rivets out of six preserved. Dimensions: l. 6.7 cm, total width including arms 3.6 cm, width of the body 1–1.1 cm, thickness of the metal plate 0.1 cm (Fig. 3: 3; reg. no. AP 97104).



Fig. 4. Podskalie. The hoard. 1 – pseudo-filigree amulet; 2 – bracelet; 3 – iron key; 4 – lock spring (drawings and photo by R. Čambal).

5. Bronze brim made of sheet metal with a 'U'-shaped cross-section. Dimensions: l. 4.7 cm, w. 0.4 cm, thickness of the metal plate 0.6 cm (Fig. 3: 4; reg. no. AP 97105).
6. Bronze pseudo-filigree, circle-shaped amulet, cast with ornamentation in the form of an imitation of two braided wires in the shape of a circular basket with a central hole. On the top, there is an open handle, placed on the full part of the amulet. Dimensions: height 8 cm, w. 2.2 cm, diam. 6.8 cm, diam. of the central hole 1.1 cm (Fig. 4: 1; reg. no. AP 97106).
7. Fragment of a bronze bracelet from a rod of circular/oval cross-section with a casting, or notches along the circumference. Dimensions: diam. 4.8 cm (Fig. 4: 2; reg. no. AP 97107).
8. Iron hooked key with an eyelet, with a rectangular body of rectangular section and a simple hook with a circular section. The body is decorated on the upper surface with eight circular punches with a diameter of 0.4 cm. The key ends with a simple oval eyelet, the ends of which overlap. Dimensions: length of the key 10.7 cm, total length including the eyelet 12.6 cm, width of the body 0.7–0.9 × 0.25 cm, diam. of the hook rod 0.4 cm (Fig. 4: 3; reg. no. AP 97108).
9. Iron spring from a lock system, with a punch-shaped ending of a circular section, bent at a right angle on one side, and on the other with a right-angled double bent end. Dimensions: l. 10.2 cm, diam. of the circular part 0.55 × 0.7 cm, width of the metal plate 0.7 × 0.2–0.4 × 0.08 cm (Fig. 4: 4; reg. no. AP 97109).



Fig. 5. Podskalie. 1–5 – cramp irons from the hoard; 6 – bronze buckle; 7; 8 – knife blades (drawings and photo by R. Čambal).

10. Cramp iron no. 1 with a body of a flat, rectangular section, from which two pointed protuberances emerge in parallel at both ends. Dimensions: l. 8.9 cm (Fig. 5: 1; reg. no. AP 97110).
11. Cramp iron no. 2 with a body of a flat, rectangular section, from which two pointed protuberances emerge in parallel at both ends. Dimensions: l. 5.7 cm (Fig. 5: 2; reg. no. AP 97111).
12. Cramp iron made of metal plate no. 5, with arms folded over double on both sides. Dimensions: 4.3 cm (Fig. 5: 3; reg. no. AP 97112).
13. Cramp iron no. 3, made of a rod of circular section. Both arms are bent into a right angle, pointed and bent over. Dimensions: l. 4.7 cm; diam. of the rod 0.5 cm (Fig. 5: 4; reg. no. AP 97113).
14. Cramp iron no. 4 with flaps placed perpendicularly to the wide body with a rectangular section. Dimensions: 4.5 cm (Fig. 5: 5; reg. no. AP 97114).
15. Bronze buckle of a square shape made of bronze wire with a circular to oval section, with a bronze cast tongue with a hole, and an iron axis of circular section. Dimensions: l. 2.8 cm, w. 2.7 cm (Fig. 5: 6; reg. no. AP 97115).
16. Blade of an iron knife with a wide, flat tang. Dimensions: total l. 12.3 cm (Fig. 5: 7; reg. no. AP 97116).
17. Blade of an iron knife with a flat tang. Dimensions: total l. 12.8 cm (Fig. 5: 8; reg. no. AP 97117).

EVALUATION

Belt hooks and parts of a belt

According to the current state of research, the two belt hooks which are in this set are for the moment an unknown and unique type of belt clasp. At present, according to the current state of research, not only from the territory of the Púchov culture (Pieta 1982; 2008; 2010), but also within the Central Danube geographic area, we are not aware of any find of this type of belt hook (Bujna 2011). Given their shape, we may call them 'anchor-shaped belt hooks'. In terms of its type, the hook itself of the belt hooks is based on zoomorphic belt hooks in the form of the

Tab. 1. Podskalie. Chemical composition of articles from hoard of non-ferrous metals. Results of measurements using the XRF method.

Hoard		Chemical composition and percentage of metal (%)							
		Measurement time: 30 sec							
		Cu	Sn	Pb	Sb	Fe	Ni	Co	Zn
1.	Belt hook no. 1 (Fig. 3: 1)	99.88	–	–	0.05	–	–	0.05	–
2.	Belt hook no. 2 (Fig. 3: 2)	90.68	2.35	0.093	0.09	0.2	–	0.09	6.58
3.	Belt decoration (Fig. 3: 3)	99.93	–	–	0.015	–	–	0.015	–
4.	Circular amulet (Fig. 4: 1)	87.62	8.96	1.17	0.127	0.084	–	0.127	2.01
5.	Bracelet (Fig. 4: 2)	89.43	9.06	0.128	0.382	0.727	0.088	0.029	–

Spectral surface X-ray analysis was performed on a XRF analyzer NITON XL3t, made by Thermo Fisher Scientific, NITON, USA (the analysis was performed by R. Čambal).

neck and head of a horse, but in this case, it is only in a purely simple, functional form. Each of them has a different ornamentation. On belt hook no. 1 (Fig. 3: 1), the inner edges of the arcs of the body and shoulders are notched (Fig. 2: 4, 6), and there is also an indication of this along the edge on the rear part of the object. The bronze belt hook no. 2 (Fig. 3: 2) is decorated with several types of punching (Fig. 2: 1–3, 5). The three circular punches on the other side of the relief ridge, from which triangles emerge towards the transversal moulding are of interest. In theory, this could be the symbol of the triangular human body and a circular head in the form of a punch. An object made of metal plate with a rivet, which was originally one of the arms of the belt hook (Fig. 3: 5), also probably belonged to this belt hook. Both belong to a belt made of organic material, most probably leather. As a clothing accessory, they were part of women's traditional clothing, and in this case, considering the width of the completely preserved belt hook no. 1, it is possible to ascertain approximately the width of the belt. It was a relatively wide band of leather, around 6–6.5 cm wide and 0.2–0.25 cm thick, on to which the belt hooks were fixed using five rivets on the body and on the arms, at a maximum distance of 4.8 cm from each other. Copper ornamentation in the form of plate forging made of copper in the shape of the letter 'X' with bent ends (Fig. 3: 3) appears to have been part of the ornamentation of the belt with belt hook no. 1. On its surface there is ornamentation in the form of embossments, which were hammered from the underside of the metal plate. The bronze moulding (Fig. 3: 4), which edged the organic part of the belt also probably belonged to the belt, and was perhaps on the opposite side facing the belt hook, where there was a hole in the belt used to place the hook of the belt hook. For dating it is important that belt hook no. 2 is made of brass and in the La Tène environment brass is known only from the 2nd half

of the 1st c. BCE may indicate the dating of these belt hooks to LTD2. Belt hooks can be dated perhaps at the end of LTD1 and the beginning of LTD2 sometime before the middle of the 1st c. BCE, thanks to the belt hook no. 2, which is already brass (with low zinc content – 6%; see Tab. 1). Brass appears in the La Tène environment as the influence of the Roman Empire, of which it is technology. It appears as a raw material for brooches sometime after 60 BCE (*Danielisová 2020, 128, 129; Istenič/Šmit 2007, 146*).

Amulet

Circular pseudo-filigree amulets made by casting in the form of a circular basket, and imitating braided double wires are known from several sites of finds from the late La Tène period, and the beginning of the earlier Roman period. Typologically and shape-wise, the closest items to our specimen, made of bronze (Fig. 4: 1), occur mainly in the area settled by bearers of the Púchov culture (*Bazovský 2014; Pieta 2008; 2010; 2014; 2019*). Within the Púchov culture, there exist two types of these amulets. The first is a cast amulet made of pseudo-filigree. There are small discs between the lines of the pseudo-filigree. The find from Folkušová (*Pieta 2014, fig. 7: 12*) as well as the find from Križovany nad Dudváhom (*Bazovský 2014, 616, fig. 3*) and Brodské (*Kraskovská 1970, 364, fig. 2: 6*) belongs to this category. An identical amulet to the one mentioned above comes from grave no. 3 in Mikušovce, from the site Malý hrádk, where it was found together with a pair of Noric-Pannonian fibulae type A 238e (*Garbsch 1965, 57, fig. 23*) and one A 67b1 (*Demetz 1999, 135*). The amulet was found in the area of the individual's waist, on the left-hand side of the pelvis (*Pieta 2019, 264, 265, 273*), which might indicate its function as part of a belt accessory. It is dated to the beginning of the earlier Roman period, to the Tiberian period,

that is B1 (*Pieta 2019*, fig. 23: 32). The second type is also a cast amulet, but the lattice of the body does not have pseudo-filigree wires. This type was found in Liptovská Mara I (*Pieta 1982*, pl. XXVIII: 4), as well as in grave 1703 in the eponymous site of Malbork-Wielbark in the area of the Wielbark culture (*Rudnicki 2012*, pl. 1: 39). The new find from the hoard from Velký Vřeštv, Trutnov distr. in the Hradec Králové, Hradec region of eastern Bohemia also belongs to this type.⁴ As far as the function of the circular pseudo-filigree amulet is concerned, this is suggested by its position in grave no. 3 Mikušovce; similarly to the set of finds from Podskalie, it was found together with two belt hooks and a metal plate belt ornamentation.

Bracelet

The set also includes half of a bronze rod bracelet with relief castings, or notching around its edge with profiled ends (Fig. 4: 2). It is alike a typical La Tène bracelet, belonging to BR-B6 according to J. Bujna's classification, occurring in La Tène female graves from LTB2c, maybe LTC1a too (*Bujna 2005*, 28, fig. 8: B6; 15). But the dating of other items in the hoard is significantly younger, so dating the bracelet to LTB2–LTC1 is unlikely. The 'bracelet' fragment may also be from the group 'Knotenrings' type 1C (*Dębiec/Karwowski 2016*, 120, fig. 6). Knotenrings of various types belong to the end of the Middle and Late La Tène (LTC2–LTD).

Parts of a lock system

The set of items also includes two objects related to a lock system. They are a simple hook key with a flat handle, decorated with circular punches (Fig. 4: 3). We are aware of similar, but unornamented, specimens from Manching (*Jacobi 1974*, 154, pl. 46: 736–742). The second object is a lock spring (Fig. 4: 4). Two identical finds also come from the oppidum in Manching (*Jacobi 1974*, pl. 47: 751, 752).

Cramp irons

Iron connecting elements in the form of clips, or cramp irons, used to connect wood, are common finds in sites from the La Tène period. In this site of objects, they were found in five pieces and in four different versions (Fig. 5: 1–5). Similar finds are

known from numerous sites in Slovakia (*Pieta 2008*, 86, fig. 40: 1–11), a significant number come from hillfort Pohanská in Plavecké Podhradie (*Paulík 1976*, 151, pl. XLIV: 1–4, 10; XLVIII: 1), where as well as in layers, they were also found in the mass find no. 5 (*Pieta 2008*, 86). They are represented in great numbers in Manching. Smaller cramp irons and clips were used more for carpentry and cooperage.

Knives

Two blades of iron knives were also found among the objects. In one case, with a wide tang coming out of the upper part of the back of the blade (Fig. 5: 7). An almost identical knife comes from Cífer, which is sometimes attributed to the grave equipment of a Germanic warrior (*Bazovský 2017*, 15, fig. 1: 2). However, it is not certain whether it really is part of his grave equipment. Similarly, such a knife was also found on the Velký Kolačín-Markovica (*Pieta 2010*, fig. 102: 5). The second knife has a tang set sharply at a right angle, coming out from the centre of the blade (Fig. 5: 8). In the La Tène period, such types of knives occurred only rarely. Due to their shape, it is probably that they are rather types from the Roman period or Middle Ages. They have numerous analogies in finds from the early Middle Ages to the High Middle Ages. Similar early medieval finds are the knife from Kláštor pod Znievom (*Pieta 2020*, fig. 16: 5) and from Modra-Zámčisko (*Farkaš 2001*, fig. 18: 1, 18). They are represented in large numbers in finds from medieval castles and settlement sites, for example from Dračí hrádok near Stupava (*Farkaš 2006*, fig. 45: 3).

Belt buckle

The discreet belt buckle made of coloured metal with a bronze tongue and an iron axle gives the impression of being a foreign element in this set of items, from the point of view of its dating (Fig. 5: 6). Its shape and structure do not belong to the La Tène period. The structure of the buckle belongs rather to the Middle Ages. It is probably a buckle from a horse tackle strap or a narrow belt.

Coins

The set of coins from Podskalie represent a wide range of nominals which were in circulation

⁴ We would like to thank our colleague Mgr. Pavol Horník from the Muzeum východních Čech in Hradec Králové (Eastern Bohemia).



Fig. 6. Podskalie. Silver Celtic coins. 1, 2 – tetradrachma of the Nitra type; 3–8 – quinarii of the Divinka type; 9 – tetradrachma of the Veľký Bysterec type; 10 – tetradrachma of the 'Slovak type' or Kolačno type; 11 – Liptovská Mara type; 12 – drachma of the Simmering type (photo by M. Budaj).

mainly in the course of the 1st c. BCE in the area of the Púchov culture. The only import is a drachma of the Simmering type, which was minted in the Bratislava oppidum.

CATALOGUE OF THE COINS⁵

1. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, tetradrachma of the Nitra type (Fig. 6: 1).
Literature: *Kolníková 1973*, 19, no. 13.

Dimensions: 10.16 g; 21.9 × 22.9 mm.

RFA analysis:

- avers: Ag – 89.29%; Au – 0.40%; Cu – 4.47%; Sn – 2.18%; Pb – 3.66%;
- revers: Ag – 90.97%; Au – 0.35%; Cu – 4.78%; Sn – 1.47%; Pb – 2.43%.

2. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, tetradrachma of the Nitra type (Fig. 6: 2).
Literature: *Kolníková 1973*, 19, no. 11(?).
Dimensions: 9.95 g; 22.2 × 22.5 mm.
RFA analysis:

⁵ We would like to thank doc. RNDr. J. Tirpák, CSc., from the Gemmology Institute of the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra and PhDr. J. Rajtár, CSc., from the Institute of Archaeology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Nitra for carrying out analyses of the coins. The measurements were performed as part of the VEGA grant 2/0150/15: Raw Materials and Technology in the Early Historic Period in Slovakia. The analysis was carried out using a portable X-ray fluorescence spectrometer DELTA CLASSIC+ of the Olympus brand USA, which is aimed at non-destructive quantitative analysis.

The technical parameters of the instrument: DELTA CLASSIC+ is an energy-dispersal RTG-fluorescence spectrometer; 4-watt RTG lamp with a current of up to 200uA; detector Si-PIN; integrated full VGA camera; possibility of narrowing the RTG ray from 9 to 3 mm for analysing small items or heterogeneous materials.

- avers: Ag – 87.12%; Au – 0.40%; Cu – 8.75%; Sn – 2.32%; Pb – 1.41%;
 - revers: Ag – 88.63%; Au – 0.35%; Cu – 6.86%; Sn – 2.61%; Pb – 1.55%.
- Note: the coin comes from a hoard of nine coins of the Nitra type, which have not been preserved.
3. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, quinarius of the Divinka type (Fig. 6: 3).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 259, no. 213.
Weight: 2.65 g.
Note: the more precise localisation of the coin within the hill-fort is not known.
 4. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, quinarius of the Divinka type (Fig. 6: 4).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 259, no. 213.
Dimensions: 1.67 g; 12.98 × 13.2 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 92.62%; Au – 0.51%; Cu – 4.78%; Zn – 1.25%; Pb – 0.85%;
 - revers: Ag – 88.30%; Au – 0.51%; Cu – 9.05%; Zn – 1.33%; Pb – 0.92%.
 5. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, quinarius of the Divinka type (Fig. 6: 5).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 259, no. 213.
Dimensions: 1.64 g; 12.9 × 13.5 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 89.08%; Au – 0.51%; Cu – 6.15%; Sn – 3.25%; Pb – 1.01%;
 - revers: Ag – 89.11%; Au – 0.59%; Cu – 6.11%; Sn – 3.19%; Pb – 1%.
 6. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, quinarius of the Divinka type (Fig. 6: 6).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 259, no. 213.
Dimensions: 2.55 g; 14.38 × 14.57 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 94.75%; Au – 0.48%; Cu – 3.96%; Pb – 0.81%;
 - revers: Ag – 94.08%; Au – 0.49%; Cu – 4.52%; Pb – 0.91%.
 7. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, quinarius of the Divinka type (Fig. 6: 7).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 259, no. 213.
Dimensions: 1.78 g; 13.1 × 13.25 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 92.75%; Au – 0.53%; Cu – 4.59%; Zn – 0.80%; Pb – 1.33%;
 - revers: Ag – 93%; Au – 0.54%; Cu – 4.40%; Zn – 0.84%; Pb – 1.22%.
 8. Central and Upper Považie/North-western Slovakia, quinarius of the Divinka type (Fig. 6: 8).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 259, doesn't have.
Dimensions: 2.37 g; 14.1 × 14.8 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 90.97%; Au – 0.37%; Cu – 3.81%; Sn – 4.13%; Pb – 0.72%;
 - revers: Ag – 90.41%; Au – 0.45%; Cu – 4.71%; Sn – 3.63%; Pb – 0.81%.
 9. Upper Považie/Northern, North-western and Eastern Slovakia/Spiš, tetradrachma of the Veľký Bysterec type (Fig. 6: 9).
Literature: *Kolníková 2004*, fig. 1: VB/A.
Dimensions: 9.50 g; 18.4 × 20 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 90.36%; Au – 1.18%; Cu – 4.76%; Sn – 3.23%; Pb – 0.47%;
 - revers: Ag – 89.78%; Au – 1.11%; Cu – 4.76%; Sn – 3.73%; Pb – 0.62%.
 10. Považie, tetradrachma of the 'Slovak type' or Kolačno type (Fig. 6: 10).
Literature: *Kostur/Gášpár 2018*, 113, no. 96.
Dimensions: 64. 6.02 g; 18.68 × 19.2 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 90.81%; Au – 1.46%; Cu – 4.75%; Sn – 1.40%; Pb – 1.57%;
 - revers: Ag – 90.87%; Au – 1.38%; Cu – 4.75%; Sn – 1.42%; Pb – 1.58%.
 11. Northern Slovakia, Liptovská Mara type (Fig. 6: 11).
Literature: *Kolníková 2004*, fig. 2: LM.
Dimensions: 3.81 g; 16.9 × 17.9 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 1.24%; Cu – 82.41%; Sn – 5.04%; Zn – 0.72%; Pb – 9.24%; As – 1.34%;
 - revers: Ag – 1.38%; Cu – 76.54%; Sn – 5.93%; Zn – 0.73%; Pb – 13.22%; As – 1.29%.
 12. South-western Slovakia, Boii, Bratislava, drachma, Simmering type (Fig. 6: 12).
Literature: *Paulsen 1933*, no. 942–947.
Dimensions: 2.07 g; 12.2 × 13.27 mm.
RFA analysis:
 - avers: Ag – 0.65%; Cu – 59.29%; Sn – 26.73%; Zn – 0.81%; Pb – 10.22%; As – 2.30%;
 - revers: Ag – 0.54%; Cu – 62.03%; Sn – 24.79%; Zn – 0.83%; Pb – 9.60%; As – 2.21%.

Of all the coins, the most interesting ones are the tetradrachmas of the Nitra type, which were already known in the specialist literature before the First World War (*Dessewffy 1910*, no. 566; 1009; 1914). This type of coin entered the specialist literature under the name of the Nitra type (*Kolníková 1973*, 15; *Pink 1974*, 66, 67). This name was given based on their first processing, when out of the fourteen known specimens, three of them came from the County Museum in Nitra (*Dessewffy 1914*), which led to the erroneous assumption that they must have been found in that city (*Ondrouch 1964*, no. 49). Whereas Dessewffy already saw a clear connection with the Cotini and coins of the Veľký Bysterec and Spiš types (*Dessewffy 1914*, 122). At present, it is clear that these coins were minted and circulated mainly in the Považie region, around Púchov and Považská Bystrica, where they mainly appeared in the hill-forts of the Púchov culture such as Jasenica, Považská Bystrica distr., Nimnica-Holiš, Púchov distr., Skalka nad Váhom, Trenčín distr. (summed up in *Kolníková/Bakoš/Pauditš 2018*, 184, 185). In addition to one-off finds, they are also known from hoards of coins. As well as the set we are studying, consisting of around nine coins, 13 to 14 tetradrachmas of the

Nitra type together with 38 spatula-shaped staters were found in Lysica, Žilina distr. (Fröhlich 2019). This is also the northernmost documented occurrence of these coins in Slovakia. Tetradrachmas of the Nitra type were first minted in the second half of the 1st c. BCE, which is not contradicted by their occurrence either in Podskalie or in other sites. Based on an iconographic match with the Roman Republic denarius L. Papius L. f. Celsus, or T. Carisius minted in 45 BCE, we assume they were minted after this period (Fröhlich 2019, 20; Moravčík/Kolníková 2000, 90). Their circulation probably continued during the Roman period, as testified by their connection with coins of the Veľký Bysterec type. Veľký Bysterec types appear on rare occasions minted on top of Nitra type coins (Dessewffy 1914, 122; Kolníková 1973, 20; 1984, 174, 175). Since it is certain that the Veľký Bysterec types were in circulation until Augustine times (4 BCE–12 CE) then this also applies to the Nitra type coins (for further details, see below). Coins of the Nitra type were subjected to analysis and show a relatively stable and relatively high quality of purity varying from 87.12–90.97%. Unfortunately, we still today lack a greater number of analyses of these coins.

When evaluating the specimens of Veľký Bysterec type coins from Jánovce Machalovce, it has been shown that they have similar purities, with an average of 90% Ag, which would document their belonging to a single currency system (Soják 2015). The specimen examined by us (cat. no. 9) also has such a purity, and this also applies in the case of the Divinka types (cat. no. 3–8). The approximately ideal purity of all the silver coins shows that it is a single currency system. This fact is also underlined by their joint occurrence not only in this hill-fort, but in other hill-forts (e.g. Košeca-Nozdrovice, where the Veľkobystrecký type, Divinka, Slovak types and so on were also found etc.; Kolníková 1998a). However, it must be said that the purity tests carried out so far point to the instability of coins of the Veľký Bysterec type. Specimens with a silver content of around 70–80% also appear frequently (Fröhlich 2015, 120, tab. 1; Soják 2015, 29, tab. 1). This implies that these coins were minted for a long time (see below), and during this period, they were unable to maintain a stable purity.

The highest number of coins in Podskalie is composed of six quinarii of the Divinka type. These are specific and relatively high-quality coins with a particular and as yet unexplained symbolism. Their iconographic origin was searched for in the

Prague type, for which a production in Prague was long assumed (Kolníková 2000). However, today it is clear that they have nothing in common with Prague and these coins were rather minted in the territory of Thüringen (summary in Militký 2015, 132, 133). However, it is difficult to imagine that they would have looked for ideas for minting their own coins from there, or used patterns from quinarii from the Trier region (Fröhlich 2019, 23). They had only minimal contacts with both regions. The idea that an itinerant coin-maker from this region would have come here is completely excluded (Kolníková/Bakoš/Pauditš 2018, 161). They are local mintages which were produced in this part of Slovakia, and together with other types of coins document a highly-professional and managed minting industry in the 1st c. BCE. The problem with the Divinka type coins is that they lack detailed typology.

An interesting feature of the set we are studying is that it also includes heavier specimens of 2.55 g and 2.67 g (cat. no. 3 and 6).⁶ The geographic circulation of these coins is approximately the same as in the case of the Nitra type, and their finds mainly come from the Považie region, with a slightly increased number recorded in northern Slovakia. Today, including the studied set, we record eight sites with these coins (Divinka and Lysica, Žilina distr.; Dolný Kubín; Košeca-Nozdrovice, Ilava distr.; Považská Bystrica; Skalka nad Váhom, Trenčín distr. and Sučany, Martin distr.; in summary e.g. Fröhlich 2019; Kolníková/Bakoš/Pauditš 2018, 184). Out of the set in Podskalie, five coins were analysed, and these showed relatively high purities from 88.30–94.75%. These coins could be dated, like the Nitra type, to the second half of the 1st c. BCE.

A one-off specimen in the set of Celtic coins was the coin of the Veľký Bysterec type. It is one of the most numerous Celtic coins on the territory of Slovakia, recorded in approximately 32 sites (Kolníková/Bakoš/Pauditš 2018, 185, 186). They occur not only in hill-forts and settlements but are also known in numerous coin hoards. An as yet unpublished find of around 1,000 of these coins even originates from the important hill-fort of Jánovce-Machalovce (Fröhlich 2015, 118). However, it is their chronological classification that is of interest, since on the basis of the find from Óhuta, the beginning of their mintage can be dated to the end of the 2nd c. to the beginning of the 1st c. BCE (Kolníková 2004, 38; Prohászka 2011–2012, 46). They were in circulation for a longer period of time, because we still record

⁶ The weights of these coins are quite unstable and range from 1.542 to 2.8 g (the heaviest specimen comes from Dolný Kubín: Kolníková 2000, 82; Kolníková/Bakoš/Pauditš 2018, 184, b/6).

them in the Roman period. In addition, the hoard from Dolný Kubín-Veľký Bysterec also points to this fact. In that hoard, in addition to the Veľký Bysterec, Spiš and Zemplín types, there was also one Roman Republic Augustus coin from 2 BCE to 14 CE, which clearly indicates the period when it was hidden (*Pieta/Kolníková 1986*). Archaeological investigations at Liptovská Mara, where part of the Celtic coins were found in this horizon, too, also date them to Roman times (*Pieta 1982, 68*). As proven by the Celtic coins from Podskalie, most of them were in circulation together, and for this reason we may assume that they were circulating during the Roman period, too.

Some of the most particular – and probably also the most problematic – coins from Podskalie include the tetradrachma, which has stirred up some confusion since its discovery (cat. no. 10). Recently, it has entered the specialist literature under the unfortunate name of Slovak type (*Kostur/Gášpár 2018, 113, no. 96, 97*). Before this, the name of Kolačno was recommended, based on the place of its first find (*Kolníková 2015, 14, fig. 3: 12*). However, its name as Slovak type is problematic for the simple reason that this name had already been given, longer ago, in the specialist literature to another – albeit very similar – coin, also originating from the territory of Slovakia (*Pink 1974, no. 483; Ručka 2012, 131–133*). These coins stand out for their well-worked head on the avers, and another version of a horse on the reverse. Above it, there is a circle, and not dots as on the coin we are currently studying. Further confusion was caused concerning these coins by the first processing of their finds on the territory of Slovakia in the 1990s. At the time of analysing the collection of finds from Košeca-Nozdrovica and Trenčianske Bohuslavice, these coins were classified among the Velem type, which was minted on the territory of today's Hungary (*Kolníková 1998a, 213, fig. 1: 4; 1998b, 31, fig. 6: 5, 7*). This was because this type of coin was originally considered in the older literature as the Velem type, and its Slovak origin was not known (*Pink 1974, 75*). However, today it is clear that these coins are mainly concentrated in the Považie area, especially around Púchov, Trenčín and Považská Bystrica. Still today, they are recorded in the already mentioned Trenčianske Bohuslavice, Nové Mesto nad Váhom distr., Košeca-Nozdrovica, Ilava distr., Kolačno, Partizánske distr., Skalka nad Váhom(?), Trenčín distr., Nimnica, Púchov distr., Udiča, Považská Bystrica distr. and Slatina nad Bebravou (Udrina hill-fort), Bánovce nad Bebravou distr. (*Kolníková 2003; mentioned here as Velem*).

The place where the coins were minted should be sought in one of these hill-forts. We cannot exclude the possibility that it was in Udrina, from where several specimens of these coins originate (this is as yet unprocessed material). The tetradrachma of the above-mentioned type underwent great development in terms of weight and iconography. We are aware of beautifully made specimens with weights from 11.90 g all the way to specimens with around 6.02 g and a typically worsened quality of image, associated with the decrease in weight.⁷ The falling quality was probably also reflected in the purity of these coins, but this assumption will only be able to be checked when a larger number of purity tests have been carried out. The above-mentioned were part of a wider currency system, and in addition to the tetradrachmas, we are also aware of didrachmas with a weight of around 5 g and obols with a weight of around 0.74 g (*Kostur/Gášpár 2018, 113, 114, no. 96–99*). As can be seen from the specimen studied, the above-mentioned coins had relatively high purities of 90.81–90.87% Ag. Unlike the majority of the coins from the set of Podskalie, however, these ones are older, and the beginning of their minting falls within LTC, that is two centuries BCE, which is also shown by the finds. They appear in intensively settled sites of finds during this period, as is the case for the location of their assumed mintage in Udrina, from where the core of the finds from LTC1 and LTC2 originate (*Pieta 2008, 112*). They appeared here in one find together with older types of staters which were minted with certainty in LTC2, probably in the second century BCE (*Fröhlich 2017, 4*).

First of all, we must expect that these coins were in circulation for a long time, because they also appear in sites such as Košeca-Nozdrovica which were only founded after the disappearance of the settlement in Trenčianske Bohuslavice and which were still intensively used in LTD2 (*Pieta 2008, 58*). This is not contradicted by the situation in Podskalie, from where the majority of coins originate only in the second half of the 1st c. BCE, although there is proven settlement in all periods, including LTC (*Benediková 2019, 136–143*).

The only specimen here was represented by a copper coin of the Liptovská Mara type. The origin of these low-quality coins can be looked for in Liptovská Sielnica-Liptovská Mara, Liptovský Mikuláš distr., where around 80 Celtic coins were found together with further evidence of coin minting during archaeological excavations (*Pieta 1996, 78*). Of these, up to 24 were of the Liptovská Mara type (*Kolníková 2004, 26, 27*). In addition to a low

⁷ This is a sample of around twelve tetradrachmas to which the authors had access; all of them come from the Považie area.

purity, they also showed unstable weights ranging between 1.09 and 5.63 g, with diameters between 13.8 and 17.5 mm (Kolníková 2004, 26). Purity tests of the above-mentioned coin showed a relatively high percentage of tin, which was also recorded in the case of other local mintages. Despite the fact that there are tin deposits in our region, their mining has never been historically proven, and they were probably imported here (Soják 2015, 29). There is more tin also on one exported coin from the set, which is the Simmering type drachma minted in the Bratislava oppidum in around 70–44 BCE (cat. no. 12). This coin is evidence of contacts with the above-mentioned area.

The set of coins from Podskalie is a precious probe into the currency in circulation in this part of Slovakia. Despite the fact that there are also mintages here dated to the 2nd c. BCE, the whole set is probably made up of coins which were in circulation mainly in the second half of the 1st c. BCE.

DATING

The set of items labelled as the hoard from Podskalie can be roughly dated to the late La Tène period of the Púchov culture. The pseudo-filigree amulet is important as a dating element. For the moment, the belt hooks are a one-off type which we have called 'anchor-type' due to their shape.

We assume that the belt hooks, the ornamentation of the belt, and perhaps amulet, too, were originally in the form of two belts made of organic material placed in the ground together with cramp irons, a key and the spring of a lock. It is not excluded that in the case of the belts, it might be a certain form of ritual deposit. A ritual subtext is assumed, for example, in the find of the bronze chain belt from LTC2 in Hluboké pri Kunštátsku in Moravia (Čižmář/Jarůšková 2019, 389). We can date the La Tène composition of finds from this set (belt hooks, belt ornamentation, amulet, fragment of a bracelet, cramp irons, key and lock spring) with the greatest probability roughly to the La Tène period LTD, perhaps at the end of LTD1 and the beginning of LTD2 sometime before the middle of the 1st c. BCE and that thanks to the belt hook no. 2, which is already brass. The set also includes items in the form of a bronze buckle and two iron knife blades which belong rather to the Middle Ages or Modern period, which fits in with the settlement pattern of the finding site. The finds of several types of Celtic coins in circulation within the Púchov culture and Považie, mainly belonging to LTD2 also fit in with the concept of the late La Tène settlement of the site. Finds from this site in the form of a hoard and different types of Celtic coins provide significant additional information on its settlement in the late La Tène period.

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