

## Nova bronastodobna odkritja iz Posočja

### New evidence on the Bronze Age in the region of Posočje

Miha MLINAR

#### Izvleček

Poselitev Posočja je bila skromnejša vse do konca bronaste dobe, ko se je skoncentrirala na območju Tolmina, Mosta na Soči in Kobarida, poznejših železnodobnih središč. Na Mostu na Soči so ostaline stavbe iz mlajše bronaste dobe raziskali leta 1975 na desnem bregu Idrijce, poselitev pa je glede na leta 2000 in 2002 izvedene arheološke raziskave delno obsegala tudi njen levi breg (ledina Repelc). Ob že znanih grobiščih na Mostu na Soči in v Tolminu je novo odkrito v Ladrah, kjer so s pokopavanjem začeli prav tako v pozni bronasti dobi (Ha B). Največ posameznih najdb je bilo odkritih ob pomembnejših prazgodovinskih poteh; nekatere (s pobočij ali vrhov gora, iz reke Soče in njenih pritokov, iz Turjeve jame pri Robiču) lahko razlagamo tudi kot votivne. Novo je odkritje depojev na najdišču Mali Gradec pri Drežnici. Dva izmed njih (I in II) sta sorodna depojem vrste Bologna, S. Francesco – Šempeter in sta bila zakopana v začetku starejše železne dobe, tretjega sestavljata bronasta skodela in votivna lopatka, medtem ko je bil v četrtem zakopu odlomek zlate pločevine.

**Ključne besede:** SZ Slovenija; Posočje; bronasta doba; KŽG; naselbine; žgani grobovi; depojske najdbe; posamezne najdbe

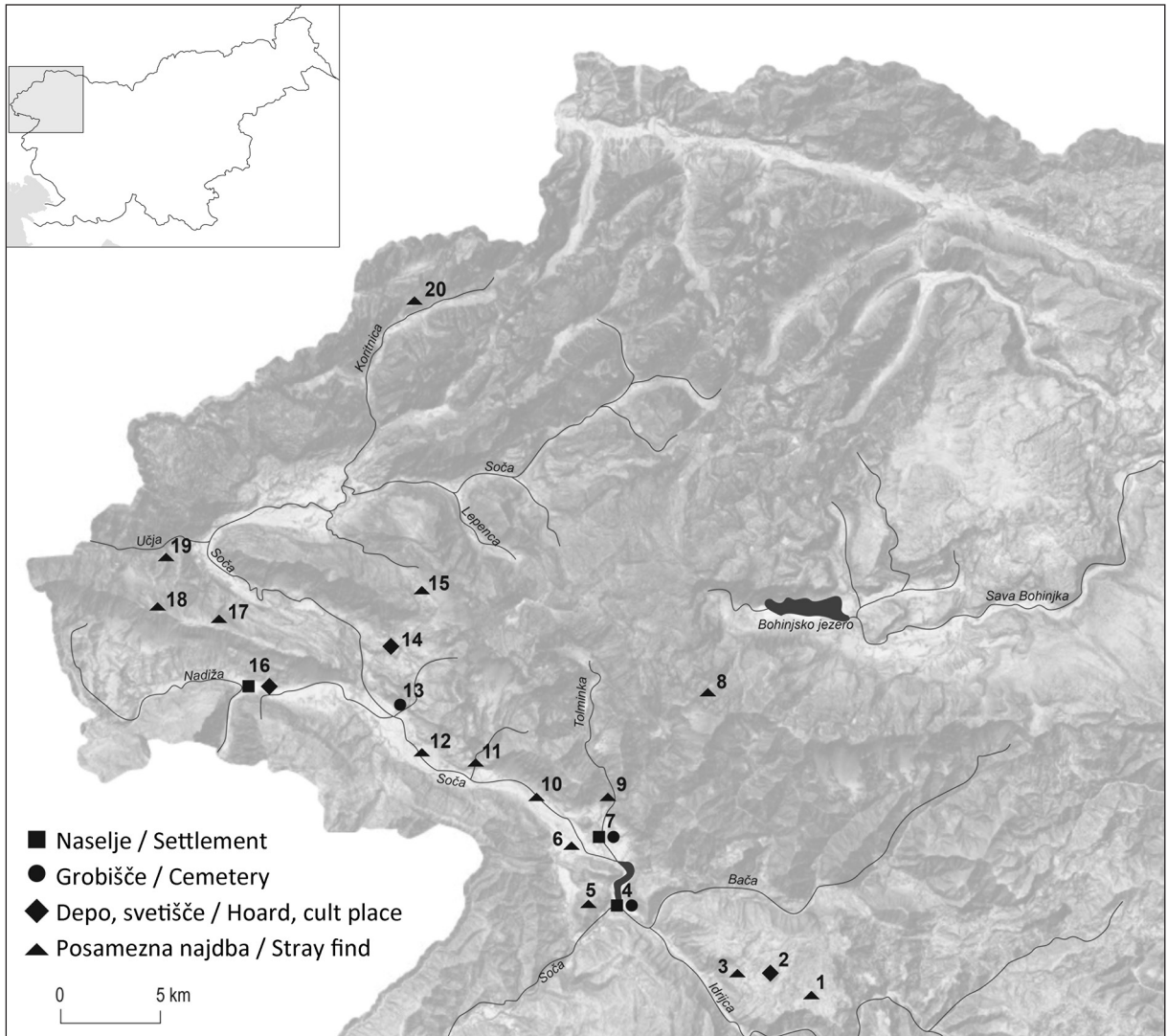
#### Abstract

The valley of the River Soča was relatively sparsely inhabited until the Late Bronze Age, when evidence suggests denser populations at Tolmin, Most na Soči and Kobarid – areas that went on to become important centres in the Iron Age. Habitation remains at Most na Soči include a Late Bronze Age building excavated in 1975 on the right bank of the Idrijca River, while archaeological investigations in 2000 and 2002 showed that people at that time also lived on the left bank (the Repelc site). Cemeteries with burials beginning in the Late Bronze Age (Ha B) have been documented at Most na Soči and Tolmin, recently also at Ladra. Stray finds predominantly line major prehistoric routes, though some (unearthed on mountain slopes or peaks, in the Soča and its tributaries, or in the cave Turjeva jama near Robič) may also be interpreted as votive offerings. The most recent find is the four hoards from Mali Gradec near Drežnica. The first two are of the Bologna, S. Francesco – Šempeter type and were buried at the beginning of the Early Iron Age; the third consists of a bronze bowl and a votive spatula, while the fourth contained two conjoining pieces of sheet gold.

**Keywords:** north-western Slovenia; Posočje; Bronze Age; Urnfield period; settlements; cremation burials; hoard finds; stray finds

Čeprav Posočje v bronasti dobi ni doživelo razcveta, kot ga poznamo v starejši železni dobi, so prav bronastodobna naselja dala osnovo za razvoj treh glavnih poselitvenih mikroent. To so območja današnjega Mosta na Soči, Tolmina in Kobarida ter Robiča.

Nekaj poznobronastodobnih (Ha B) najdb je med sistematičnimi raziskavami na prostranem železnodobnem grobišču na Mostu na Soči že ob koncu 19. stoletja izkopal Carlo Marchesetti (Marchesetti 1893, 174, t. 22: 20,25; 27: 7; prim. Teržan 2002, 89). Ob tem je zanimivo dejstvo, da



Sl. 1: Karta bronastodobnih najdišč v Posočju (dodano po Svoljšak 1988–1989, sl. 7).

Fig. 1: Map of Bronze Age sites in the Posočje region (adapted from Svoljšak 1988–1989, Fig. 7).

1 – Šentviška Gora – Podovnice; 2 – Vrh Ilovice na Šentviški planoti / Vrh Ilovice on Šentviška planota; 3 – Pečine – Vrh gradu; 4 – Most na Soči; 5 – Kozmerice; 6 – Soča – Volče; 7 – Tolmin; 8 – Globoko; 9 – Zatoľmin – Selce; 10 – Soča – Gabrje; 11 – Mrzli potok – Selišče; 12 – Soča – Kamno; 13 – Ladra – Na Goricah; 14 – Mali Gradec pri Drežnici / Mali Gradec near Drežnica; 15 – Planini Zapleč in Zaprikraj / Zapleč and Zaprikraj alps; 16 – Robič – Sv. Volar in / and Turjeva jama; 17 – Planina Božca / Božca alp; 18 – Stol; 19 – Murna Glava; 20 – Strmec.

(podlaga / basemap: Gis KD)

sočasnih najdb ni zaslediti na izkopnem polju Josefa Szombathyja (prim. Teržan 2002, op. 29). Grobovi iz časa kulture žarnih grobišč so bili raziskani tudi med izkopavanji na tolminskem prazgodovinskem grobišču pod Kozlovim robom ob koncu 60. in v začetku 70. let 20. stoletja, ki jih je izvedel Goriški muzej pod vodstvom Draga Svoljšaka (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001; Teržan 2002, 86–89, 91–94; Škvor Jernejčič, Vinazza 2016, 50–51, sl. 8). Naselbinske raziskave so bile v letih velikih grobiščnih raziskav še povsem v povojih. Omeniti velja le arheološki pregled (sondiranje?) Carla Marchesettija na prazgo-

dovinskem gradišču na sv. Volarju pri Robiču, ki je prinesel nasploh prve podatke o bronastodobni poselitvi (Marchesetti 1890, 215–216; 1892, 14).

Raziskave in odkritja iz bronaste dobe v Posočju od začetne faze do konca 80. let 20. stoletja je ovrednotil Drago Svoljšak, ki je z izkopom edinstvene stavbne ostaline s konca srednje bronaste dobe z Mosta na Soči to najdišče uvrstil tudi na seznam bronastodobnih naselbin (Svoljšak 1988–1989, sl. 7).

V članku predstavljamo najdišča in najdbe, odkrite ob koncu 20. in v začetku 21. stoletja (sl. 1). Prevladujejo posamične najdbe, med arheološkimi



Sl. 2: Most na Soči – Repelc. Pogled na prazgodovinsko naselbinsko plast z odlomki črno žgane keramike.  
Fig. 2: Most na Soči – Repelc. Prehistoric habitation layer with sherds of black fired pottery.

raziskavami izpostavljam izkopavanja Tolminskega muzeja na najdišču Repelc na Mostu na Soči v letih 2000 in 2002 (Mlinar 2002, 21, sl. 12; 2020).

### NASELBINE

Na ledini Repelc na levem bregu Idrijce na Mostu na Soči so bili leta 2000 raziskani predvsem žgani železnodobni in rimski grobovi. Ker gre za območje prazgodovinskega grobišča, je bilo odkritje naselbinske kulturne plasti z zaplatami temnorjave do rdečerjave prežgane ilovice, ostanki slabo prežganega hišnega glinastega ometa oker barve, razpršenim lesnim ogljem, zbitim lapornatim drobirjem, vodoravno položenimi ploščami rdečkastega in sivega laporja, ostalinami dveh stavbnih stojk ter odlomki prazgodovinske keramike nepričakovano (sl. 2). Skromni ostanki ožgane ilovnate plasti z ogljem, ožganimi lapornatimi drobci ter črno in rdečerjavo žgano keramiko so bili na tej ledini odkriti tudi med raziskavami leta 2002. Vse našete ostaline razlagamo kot naselbinske ostanke, ki so predvsem na osnovi primerjalne analize keramičnih najdb iz obdobja Bd D po srednjeevropski (t. 1: 1–7) oz. *Bronzo recente* po italijanski kronologiji (Mlinar 2020, 39, t. 15A: 1,3,5–9), delno pa tudi iz začetne faze starejše železne dobe (Mlinar 2020, t. 15A: 2,4). Odkritje poselitve na levem bregu Idrijce na Mostu na Soči je presenetljivo in pomeni

novost, saj so bili doslej znani le bronastodobni naselbinski ostanki na njenem desnem bregu (Svoljšak 1988–1989, 369–371). Glede na odkriti jami za stojke na Repelcu domnevamo, da je šlo za podobno gradnjo kot pri bronastodobni hiši na desnem bregu Idrijce, ki je bila grajena prav tako s stojkami, brez uporabe kamnitih temeljev (Svoljšak 1988–1989, 371, sl. 3; 4).

Tudi prostor ožje Kobariške je bil stalneje naseljen šele od konca srednje bronaste dobe, kar kažejo najdbe z gradišča Sv. Volar na desnem bregu Nadiže pri Robiču.<sup>1</sup> Na tej skalnati izravnavi ob vznožju Mije se je razvila naselbina, ki je izkoristila dobro geostrateško lego in naravno zaščiten prostor nad rečnim okljukom. Že tržaški arheolog Carlo Marchesetti je konec 19. stoletja tam izkopal lončenino, živalske kosti in bronaste predmete (Marchesetti 1890, 215–216; 1892, 14; Rutar 1891, 206), tolminski zgodovinar Simon Rutar pa je bil prvi, ki je opozoril na obstoj dvojnega obrambnega obzidja na obodu naselbine, ki ga je sicer opredelil za rimskodobnega (Rutar 1890, 127; prim. Štular 2011). Ob koncu 20. stoletja so z iskalci kovinskih predmetov na najdišču odkrili še poznobronastodobno sulično kopito ali dleto (Bratina 1997, 196; 2001a, 110) in bronasto plavutasto sekiro s srednje stoječimi plavutmi

<sup>1</sup> To dokazuje tudi bronastodobna keramika iz bližnje Turjeve jame (gl. poglavje Jamska najdišča).

(*t. 1: 8*) iz Ha A (Mlinar, Gerbec, Laharnar 2014, 27, kat. št. 3; Gerbec, Mlinar 2015a, 397, 398).

Glede na raziskane prazgodovinske žgane grobove pod Kozlovim robom v Tolminu (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001; prim. Teržan 2002, 86–89, 91–94; Škvor Jernejčič, Vinazza 2016, 50–51, sl. 8) je bil ob koncu bronaste dobe poseljen tudi prostor Tolmina. Navkljub nekaterim indicem in najdbam posameznih odlomkov prazgodovinske keramike (prim. Svoljšak 2002, 7) je bila lega osrednje naselbine do nedavnega neznana. Z odkritjem naselbinske plasti s prazgodovinsko keramiko leta 2025 jo verjetno lahko lociramo na območje Petelinca, osončeno izravnavo na zahodnem robu mesta, na južnem pobočju Kozlovega roba (Brezigar, Fabec, Nanut 2026, 43).

### VODNE NAJDBE

Soča je s svojimi pritoki izoblikovala podobo narave in ljudi, ki so živeli ob njej. Pomenila jim je reden vir hrane in vode, uporabljali so jo za plavljenje lesa, v različnih arheoloških obdobjih pa je predstavljala tudi fizično oviro mnogim ljudstvom, ki so z vzhoda vdirala proti Apeninskemu polotoku. Arheološke najdbe iz reke in njenih prodišč kažejo, da je imela pomembno vlogo tudi v duhovnem svetu takratnega prebivalstva, saj so ji darovali različne predmete, predvsem orožje. Največ tovrstnih najdb je iz pozne bronaste in železne dobe. Verjetno so bila ob reki posebej izbrana mesta, namenjena odlaganju oziroma darovanju predmetov. V tem smislu je zanimivo predvsem rečno obrežje med Kobaridom in Tolminom, saj je prav tu odkritega največ bronastodobnega orožja: sekir in suličnih osti (Mlinar 2007; Gerbec, Mlinar 2011, 7–9). Tudi med ostalimi vodnimi najdbami iz Slovenije prevladuje orožje, predvsem meči in bodala, velik je tudi delež suličnih osti in sekir (Šinkovec 1996, sl. 18). Tovrstne daritve lahko zato morda razlagamo tudi v kontekstu obredov simbolnega očiščevanja po uboju ali bitki (Teržan 1996, 255; 1999, 124, 142). Med bronastimi sekirami iz Soče je zastopana samo plavutasta vrsta. Ob že znanih najdbah bronaste plavutaste sekire iz rečnega proda na desnem bregu reke pri Peršetih pri Volčah (Mlinar 2006, 237–238) in bronaste plavutaste sekire s srednje stoječimi plavutmi iz Mrzlega potoka, levega pritoka Soče pri Seliščih (Bratina 2001b, 143), je najnovejše odkritje bronaste plavutaste sekire s prodišča Soče pod ledino Berje pri Gabrjah (*sl. 3; t. 1: 9*). Sekiro je leta 2018 v prodnatem



Sl. 3: Gabrje – Berje. Bronasta plavutasta sekira na mestu odkritja.

Fig. 3: Gabrje – Berje. Bronze winged axe upon discovery.

nanosu med večjimi kamni našel arheolog Gašper Rutar in jo predal v hrambo Tolminskemu muzeju. Ker je povsem nepoškodovana, se zdi, da je bila odložena v bližini odkritja (Mlinar, Rutar 2024). Sekira je poznobronastodobne oblike (prim. P. Turk, M. Turk 2019, sl. 238: 3) in sodi v skupino plavutastih sekir vrste Teor, ki so z redkimi izjemami zamejene na prostoru med rekama Livenza in Soča (Tasca 2017, sl. 2).

Poznobronastodobne oblike sta tudi sulični osti, odkriti pri mostu v Kamnem (Mlinar, Klasing 2001, 50) in med deli pri separaciji peska

Na Dolinah pri Volčah<sup>2</sup> (*t. 2: 1*) (Gerbec, Mlinar 2015b, 406). Reka Soča je domačinom pomenila mnogo več kot samo vir vode tudi v železni dobi. Njen kulturni vidik poudarjata tudi rimska kamnita oltarja s posvetilnima napisoma njenemu božanstvu Aesontiju (*Aesontius*), ki sta bila odkrita ob spodnjem toku reke (prim. Vedaldi Iasbez 1996; Bratož 2001, 32–33).

## POTI

Na prelazih ali pobočjih gora so bile odkrite številne najdbe, ki jih lahko razlagamo kot izgubljene, odložene ali darovane predmete, nekatere pa tudi v povezavi s transhumantnim pašništvom (prim. Šinkovec 1996, 161). Iz Posočja sta že dolgo znana bronast polnoročajni meč s Strmca na Predelu (Svoljšak 1988–1989, 367, sl. 1) in bronasta plavutasta sekira.<sup>3</sup> Slednja je bila odložena ali izgubljena na najkrajši povezavi med Breginjskim kotom in Bovško, ki je potekala čez planino Božca proti Žagi. Odkrita je bila pred več kot stoletjem nekje na pobočju Stola nad vasjo Sedlo, hrani pa jo tržaški mestni muzej (Marchesetti 1893, 319; 1903, 89; Svolljšak 1988–1989, 367, sl. 2: 1).

Da ne gre za osamljeno najdbo s pobočja Stola, kaže najdba bronaste tulaste sekire (*t. 2: 2*), ki jo je Marko Komac dobil pri kalu na planini Božca. Sekiro z (odlomljenim) ušescem, odebeljenim ustjem in rahlo kolenčastim, v preseku stopničastim prehodom tula v list lahko opredelimo v mlajši del kulture žarnih grobišč. Tulaste sekire so se v mlajši bronasti dobi v naš prostor razširile iz vzhodnega dela Evrope. Veliko jih je okrašenih z motivom v obliki črke V, malo pa je takih, kot je primerek z Božce, pri katerem okras imitira plavuti (prim. Šinkovec 1996, 136).

V kontekstu prazgodovinske povezave med Breginjskim kotom in zgornjo Soško dolino oz. Bovškim lahko obravnavamo tudi najdbo s 1080 m visokega hriba Murna glava (Prvi Hum) nad vasjo Žaga. Na vrhu te vzpetine je najditelj dobil bronasto bodalo (*t. 2: 3*) z rezilom rombičnega preseka in luknjicama za zakovico na ročajni

plošči (Mlinar, Horvat 2018). Najdba je oblikovno primerljiva bodalom vrste Veruno, ki so značilna za konec srednje bronaste dobe oziroma Bd D/Ha A1 (prim. Bianco Peroni 1994, 80, t. 40: 627).

V bronasti dobi so bila obiskovana tudi prostrana območja nekaterih danes še živečih pašnih planin na levem bregu Soče. To dokazujejo odlomki kronološko težje opredeljive bronastodobne keramike in kamnita puščična ost, odkriti med arheološkimi raziskavami na planinah Zaprikraj in Zapleč (M. Turk 2007, 44, t. 3: 11), ki jih lahko razlagamo kot sledi lovskih aktivnosti (Knific et al. 2021, 31). S tega prostora izvira tudi enostaven bronast nožek (*t. 2: 4*), ki nima ustreznih primerjav, tipološko pa sodi v čas Ha A1/A2 (Knific et al. 2021, 31, kat. št. 7).

Zaradi bogatih nahajališč železove rude in možnosti sezonske paše je bilo v železni dobi lokalnemu prebivalstvu pomembno območje Bohinjsko-Tolminskega gorovja, tedaj enotnega prostora v okvirjih svetolucijske in idrijske kulture (prim. Mlinar, Turk 2016, 36–38). Eden od prehodov, ki je bil v uporabi že v prazgodovini, je tudi Globoko (*sl. 1: 8*). Na tolminski strani prelaza je najditelj Primož Kos dobil bronast nož z obročastim zaključkom (*t. 2: 6*), ki ga hrani Tolminski muzej. Sodi med nože vrste Benvenuti z S-oblikovanim rezilom in trikotnim presekom rezila, ki se pojavljajo izključno v grobnih celotah stopnje Este II oziroma 8. st. pr. n. št. na grobiščih v Estah (prim. Bianco Peroni 1976, 31–32, t. 11: 103–108).

Šentviška planota (*sl. 1: 1–3*) je v prazgodovini predstavljala naravno povezavo med Posočjem in notranjostjo Slovenije. To komunikacijo so začeli vzpostavljati že ob koncu bronaste dobe, predvsem pa je izrazita v železni dobi. Bronastodobne posamične najdbe, ki dokazujejo prehodnost, morda tudi občasno obljudenost te planote, so odlomek bronastega srpa, bronast nož ter odlomki bronaste uhate sekire in bronastih ingotov.

Z najdišča Vrh gradu pri Pečinah izvira odlomek bronastega jezičastoročajnega srpa (Mlinar et al. 2018, 26, 32, kat. št. 1). Srpi in njihovi odlomki sodijo med najznačilnejše najdbe kulture žarnih grobišč (prim. Pavlin 2023). Primarno gre za poljedelsko orodje, ki so ga lahko uporabili tudi kot sredstvo predmonetarne izmenjave, v semantičnem smislu pa je srp simbol rodovitnosti ali lunarni simbol (prim. Teržan 2016, 386).

Bronast nož (*t. 2: 5*) s perforiranim trakastim ročajem, ki se konča z razcepljenim zaključkom, okrašenim z vtisnjenimi krožci, je najditelj Vasja Seljak našel na lokaciji Podovnice, vzhodno od

<sup>2</sup> Najdba je bila odkrita med separacijo gramoza na obratu Doline gradbenega podjetja Kolektor CPG. Primarno najdišče sekire ni znano, vsekakor pa izvira iz izkopov gramoza na soških prodiščih med Kobaridom in Tolminom.

<sup>3</sup> Po posredovani informaciji je še eno bronasto plavutasto sekiro neznan najditelj dobil tudi na poznorimskem najdišču Selce nad Zatočminom. Natančni najdiščni podatki in podatki o hrambi niso znani.

arheološkega najdišča Berlotov rob. Glede splošnih značilnosti bi nož sodil v tip Matrei po tipologiji Bianco Peronijeve. Gre za vrsto nožev iz starejše faze KŽG oz. Ha A1, ki so široko zastopani na obeh straneh Alp (Bianco Peroni 1976, 16, 18, t. 4: 24–37). Pri primerku s Šentviške planote je poseben zaključek z razcepljenim zaključkom ročaja, katerega polkrožna oblika je primerljiva z nožem iz močvirja pri kraju Pastrengo v Benečiji (Bianco Peroni 1976, t. 4: 36), medtem ko je razcepljen zaključek ročaja unikatni. Na osnovi lege v bližini znanega železnodobnega svetišča ga lahko obravnavamo v kontekstu votivnih najdb.

Odlomki bronaste uhate sekire (t. 2: 7), bronastih ingotov bikonične oblike (t. 2: 8–9), ploščatega bronastega ingota, izdelanega v dvojnem kalupu (t. 2: 10), in odlomek pogačastega surovca lomljene površine (t. 2: 11), ki so bili razpršeni po meliorirani terasi na vzhodnem pobočju Vrha Ilovice, morda predstavljajo del nekoč skupnega zakopa, depoja.<sup>4</sup> Najdišče leži jugozahodno od domnevne železnodobne naselbine na Dobju (Mlinar et al. 2018, 22–23, sl. 18), katere pripadajoče plano žgano grobišče je bilo leta 2007 delno raziskano (Laharnar, Mlinar 2011), na prostor bližnjega Cuzelina pri Bilšavi pa je vezana tudi pripoved o prvi poselitvi Šentviške planote (Laharnar 2018, 374).

## GROBIŠČA

Novoodkrita je žgano plano grobišče z zahodnega roba ledine Na Goricah, travnatoga platoja severozahodno od vasi Ladra. V izravnani korenini je bila najprej odkrita bronasta sulična ost (t. 2: 12) s fasetiranim tulom, ki verjetno predstavlja pridatek iz uničenega moškega groba s konca kulture žarnih grobišč (Knific et al. 2021, 16, kat. št. 8; Mlinar, Tecco Hvala 2022, 428, t. 1: 6). Čeprav prilaganje orožja moškimi v grobove v Posočju ni bilo v navadi (prim. Teržan, Trampuž 1976, 418), sta bili primerljivi sulični osti odkriti tudi v grobu 158 in zasipu med grobovi na tolminskem prazgodovinskem grobišču (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001, 66, t. 27: 10, 99: 17; Pogačnik 2002, 75). Ostale najdbe, pobrane v korenini, pripadajo starejšeželeznodobnemu ženskemu žganemu grobu (Knific et al. 2021, kat. št. 8, na fotografiji zgoraj) iz začetka 8. st. pr. n. št. (prim. Teržan 2002, 98–99).

Plano žgano grobišče s konca bronaste dobe in prvega obdobja v razvoju železnodobne sve-

tolucijske skupine (Knific et al. 2021, 32; Mlinar, Tecco Hvala 2022, 428) tako postavljamo ob bok že omenjenim posameznim grobovom in najdbam iz Tolmina (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001; Teržan 2002, 86–89, 91–94; Škvor Jernejčič, Vinazza 2016, 50–51, sl. 8) in z Mosta na Soči (Marchesetti 1893, 174, t. 22: 20,25; 27: 7; prim. Teržan 2002, 89).

## JAMSKA NAJDIŠČA

V bronasto dobo sodi večji del najdb iz Turjeve jame, ki se nahaja ob jugozahodnem vznožju hriba Sv. Volar pri Robiču. Zgodovina raziskav v tej jami sega v konec 19. stoletja, ko je bila med pregledi Carla Marchesettija ob najdbah bronastodobne lončenine in živalskih kosti odkrita bronasta igla (šivanka) z ušescem<sup>5</sup> (Rutar 1890, 127; Marchesetti 1903, 89–90, op. 3; Bressan 1988–1989, 519–527). Jamo je leta 1898 pregledoval tudi Achille Tellini, član Furlanskega speleološko-hidrološkega društva. Med najdbami omenja preluknjano lupino školjke srčanke (*Cardium edula*), ki verjetno predstavlja del ogrlice (Visentini 2020, 113–114; Jamnik, Blažina 2023, 66). Iz jame izvirajo tudi kovinske (Čerče, Šinkovec 1995, 221–223, t. 142 A) in keramične najdbe (Knavs, Mlinar 2005, 59–72),<sup>6</sup> odkrite konec 20. stoletja, ki jih hrani Tolminski muzej. Med bronastimi predmeti prepoznamo odlomek plavutaste sekire, poškodovani jezičastoročajni bodali in osem odlomkov srpov.<sup>7</sup> Čeprav so strokovnjaki te najdbe razumeli kot depojsko najdbo, torej predmete, ki so bili z nekim namenom sočasno zakopani (Čerče, Šinkovec 1995, 221; Tasca 2020, 118), je preverba okoliščin odkritja pokazala, da niso bili vsi predmeti odloženi in izkopani na istem mestu,<sup>8</sup> zato v tem primeru verjetno ne gre za klasično depojsko najdbo. Omenjene najdbe prav tako niso bile v uporabi sočasno, ampak v časovnem

<sup>5</sup> Najdbe hranita muzeja *Museo Friulano di Storia Naturale di Udine* v Vidmu in Mestni muzej v Trstu (*Museo d'Antichità J. J. Winckelmann di Trieste*). Keramika je opredeljena v čas od pozne faze *Bronzo medio* do konca *Bronzo Recente* (Tasca 2020, 140).

<sup>6</sup> Keramične najdbe zaobjemajo obdobje Br D in Ha A1 (Knavs, Mlinar 2005, 64; prim. Tasca 2020).

<sup>7</sup> Med odkritimi najdbami je bilo tudi neznano število surovcev, ki pa jih je najditelj pustil v jami (prim. Čerče, Turk 1996, op. 33).

<sup>8</sup> Že Pavlin piše, da sta bili bronasti bodali odkriti nekoliko stran od ostalih predmetov (Pavlin 1995, 222; gl. tudi Tasca 2020).

<sup>4</sup> Gl. poglavje Depojske najdbe / posebna mesta v naravi.



Sl. 4: Mali Gradec pri Drežnici. Pogled na lokacijo depojev Pod skalo.

Fig. 4: Mali Gradec near Drežnica. Location of the hoards at Pod skalo.

razponu med 13. in 11. st. pr. n. št. (prim. Tasca 2020, 118). Sestava vseh v Turjevi jami odkritih najdb (keramika, kovinski predmeti, živalske kosti s sledovi rezanja), namerna razbitost keramike in ožganost kovinskih predmetov nakazuje, da je bil tam zelo verjetno daritveni prostor oz. kulno mesto (Mlinar, Gerbec, Laharnar 2014, 14), morda obredni prostor v povezavi s kultom plodnosti (Jamnik, Blažina 2023). Obredje na prazgodovinskih kulturnih mestih je namreč pogosto povezano z odlaganjem, razbijanjem in sežiganjem različnih predmetov. V tem kontekstu razumemo podatek Carla Marchesettija o odkritju plasti zemlje z ogljem, pepelom in odlomki keramike (Marchesetti 1893; prim. Pessina 2007, 26). Nekaj bronastodobnih najdb so v jami pobrali tudi med ogledi leta 2018 in 2022, med drugim dve keramični vretenci za statve, bronasto iglo (šivanko) in bronast surovec.<sup>9</sup> Hrani jih Tolminski muzej (Jamnik, Blažina 2023, 73–76, sl. 6 b–f).

<sup>9</sup> Morda gre za eno izmed najdb, ki jih je najditelj "depoja" pustil v jami (gl. op. 7).

#### DEPOJSKE NAJDBE / POSEBNA MESTA V NARAVI

David Kapitan je leta 2022 Tolminskemu muzeju v stalno hrambo predal bronaste najdbe, ki jih je leta 2020 s pomočjo iskalca kovin izkopal pod previsno steno oziroma manjšim spodmolom na jugovzhodnem robu Malega Gradca pri Drežnici (toponim Pod skalo; sl. 1: 14; 4). Najdbe so bile zakopane v dveh špranjah (razpokah), ki smo jih označili kot depojski najdbi I in II, predmeta iz depojske najdbe III sta ležala na skalnati polički, približno 4 metre jugovzhodno od depoja I pa je najditelj v skalni špranji našel košček tanke zlate pločevine (depo IV).<sup>10</sup>

V jami, označeni kot depojska najdba I, je najditelj izkopal bronasto uhato sekiro, več večjih odlomkov spodnjega in gornjega dela uhatih sekir, odlomek poševne stranske grbe bronaste uhate sekire in veliko koščkov razlomljenih uhatih sekir oz. ingotov, bronasto plavutasto

<sup>10</sup> Prva omemba najdišča v Mlinar 2025, 36. V prispevku navajamo preliminarne ugotovitve; najdišče bo objavljeno in kataloško predstavljeno v samostojnem članku.



Sl. 5: Mali Gradec pri Drežnici, konservirani predmeti iz depoja I.  
Fig. 5: Mali Gradec near Drežnica. Objects of Hoard I after conservation.

sekiro, dva odlomka bronastih plavutastih sekir, tri odlomke paličastih ingotov in pet odlomkov bronastih pogač (sl. 5). Po pripovedovanju najditelja je na vrhu zakopa oziroma približno 20 cm pod zasutjem iz zemlje in drobirja ležala v celoti ohranjena bronasta uhata sekira, pod njo bronasta plavutasta sekira in ostale razdrobljene najdbe, ki so zapolnjevale špranjo do globine 35 cm. Vmes so se med predmeti pojavljale tudi manjše zaplate zemlje in kamenčkov, a je zasutje po pripovedovanju delovalo enovito.

Depojska najdba II je ležala približno 120 cm SZ od prve. Sestavljajo jo dve bronasti plavutasti sekiri, bronasta uhata sekira in več večjih in manjših odlomkov razsekanih uhatih sekir, odlomek srpa in odlomka bronaste pogače. Po pripovedovanju najditelja sta na vrhu zakopa ležali v celoti ohranjeni plavutasti sekiri, pod njima uhata sekira, na dnu pa drobni bronasti odlomki (sl. 6).

Bronasta skodelica in bronasta lopatka (paleta) sta bili najdeni severozahodno od depojske najdbe II (sl. 7).<sup>11</sup> Skodelica je bila položena na skalnato poličko in pokrita z manjšim kamnom polkrogle oblike, ki ga je prekrival ostrorobi grušč. Bronasta lopatka je bila postavljena pokonci ob posodi, za-

<sup>11</sup> Približno 1 m severno od najdbe je najditelj v špranji pobral dva odlomka ostenja prostoročno izdelane keramike, ki sta glede na izgled in fakturo železnodobna.

pičena z rezilom v ilovico. Lokacijo smo označili za depojsko najdbo III.

Najditelj je približno 4 metre jugovzhodno od zakopa I v skalni špranji našel košček tanke zlate pločevine (lističa), ki se je razlomila na dva odlomka. Čeprav gre v tem primeru za najdbo posamičnega predmeta, ga zaradi najdiščnega konteksta, dragocenosti materiala in dejstva, da je bil odlomek zlate pločevine v izvornem kontekstu verjetno našit na (danes neohranjeno) tkanino, izjemoma lahko obravnavamo kot (ohranjeni del) še ene depojske najdbe, depoja IV.<sup>12</sup>

Na mestu odkritja depojev smo arheologi Tolminskega muzeja in Skupine Stik v namen preverbe najdišča leta 2024 izvedli izkop in rekonstruirali njihovo natančno lego, sicer pa je bil rezultat izkopa testnih jarkov v arheološkem smislu negativen (Mlinar, Klasinc, Magdič 2024).

Depojski najdbi Drežnica – Mali Gradec I in II sta sorodni depojem vrste Bologna, S. Francesco – Šempeter, ki vsebujejo izključno bronaste predmete, med katerimi je veliko odlomkov plavutastih sekir in večji delež uhatih sekir ter ingotov, predmeti pa

<sup>12</sup> Po definiciji je depojska najdba ali depo sicer sklop dveh ali več predmetov, ki so bili zaradi različnih razlogov namerno skriti, zakopani v zemljo, položeni v jame in skalne razpoke ipd., in jih ločujemo od posameznih najdb (Čerče, Turk 1996, 7).



Sl. 6: Mali Gradec pri Drežnici, konservirani predmeti iz depoja II.

Fig. 6: Mali Gradec near Drežnica. Objects of Hoard II after conservation.



Sl. 7: Mali Gradec pri Drežnici, konservirani predmeti iz depoja III.

Fig. 7: Mali Gradec near Drežnica. Objects of Hoard III after conservation.

so (po navadi) odloženi znotraj starejšeeželeznodobnih naselbin (prim. P. Turk 2018).

Pri tovrstnih zakopih, ki se pojavljajo skoraj v celoti v zahodni Sloveniji in severovzhodni Italiji (Nanut 2018, sl. 11), gre za fenomen dolgotrajnega odlaganja predmetov (P. Turk 2018). Po sestavi

najdb sta depoja I in II z Malega Gradca primerljiva depojem na Jelenovem klancu v Kranju (Pavlin et al. 2024), v Malinici pri Klani (Blečić Kavur 2021, 545), železnodobnemu depoju iz Dragomlja (P. Turk, Svetličič, Pavlovič 2023, 116–125), depojema z Gobavice pri Mengšu (Pavlin, Turk 2014), depoju

z Gastabila pri Dolenjih Ravnah na Cerkljanskem (Nanut 2018, 139–141) in depoju iz Šempetra pri Gorici (Furlani 1996).

Tipološke in slogovne značilnosti predmetov iz drežniških depojev I in II kažejo na kronološki razpon od 10. do 8. st. pr. n. št., zato je mogoče zakopa datirati v 8. st. pr. n. št.

Drugačna je sestava in časovna opredelitev depoja III z Malega Gradca, ki je verjetno mlajši od depojev I in II. Sestavljata ga namensko odloženi bronasta skodela z ročajem in lopatka. Primerjav za tako sestavo depojske najdbe s slovenskega prostora ne poznamo, je pa kombinacija med skodelo in lopatko dokumentirana v kulturi Golasecca.<sup>13</sup>

Skodela s presegačim ročajem ima po obliki in motivu vrezanih šrafiranih trikotnikov v obliki volčjih zob primerjave na grobišču Dürrnberg pri Halleinu (Moosleitner, Pauli, Penninger 1974, t. 132; Prüssing 1991, 22, t. 4: 25,26.), ki datirajo v Ha D3 (Pauli 1978, 343), medtem ko tovrstne posode v Nemčiji opredeljujejo v Ha C (Jakob 1995, t. 8: 42–43). Nekaj podobnih primerkov je znanih tudi z Dolenjske, a so ti nižji in bolj skledastih kot skodelastih oblik (prim. Jereb 2016, t. 139: 307,308).

Z jugovzhodnoalpskega prostora je ob dveh najdbah iz depoja v Šempetru pri Gorici (Furlani 1996, 85–86, sl. 4: 10) edinstvena bronasta lopatka (paleta), kakršne se med 7. in 4. st. pr. n. št. pojavljajo v depojih, svetiščih, predvsem pa grobovih venetske kulture, kulture Golasecca in pri Etruščanih<sup>14</sup> (Zuffa 1956–1957, 73–74; Fogolari 1975, 183; Frontini 1991, 105; Mihovilić 2003, 211; Sacchetti 2016, 320). Njihov pomen ni dokončno razjasnjen. Nekateri avtorji jih povezujejo s kultu poljedelstva in plodnosti ter ob tem navajajo grškega zgodovinarja Teopompa, ki pravi, da so Veneti v času setve vranam ponudili žrtevno torto, za kar bi lahko uporabljali tako lopatko (Fogolari 1975, 176). Drugi te predmete razlagajo kot lopatke za zbiranje pepela v obredu, povezanem s hišnim ognjiščem, ali jih povezujejo s tkanjem (prim. Mihovilić 2003, 211–212). Giovanna Gambacurta vidi votivne lopatke iz ženskih grobov za označevalce posebnega statusa pokojnice v skupnosti oziroma vodje, *mater familias* (Gambacurta 1994, 158). Za območja, kjer so v starejši železni dobi umrle sežigali, torej tudi v Posočju, je sprejemljiva razlaga Federice Sacchetti, ki pravi, da so tovrstne pripomočke uporabljali v pogrebnem ritualu, in

sicer za zbiranje kostnih ostankov sežganega pokojnega ali za zbiranje sežganih kosti žrtvovane živali (Sacchetti 2016, 320–321).<sup>15</sup>

Glede na obliko in prstanast zaključek je lopatka iz tretjega depoja na Malem Gradcu primerljiva različici C po tipologiji Zuffe, ki je značilna za območje etruščanskega mesta Chiusi (Zuffa 1956–1957, sl. 1: C), po obliki recipienta pa kaže tudi sorodnosti z nekaterimi venetskimi primerki (prim. Gambacurta 1994, 157–158, sl. 4).

Poskus razlage depojskih najdb izpod Malega Gradca je težaven. Posamezni elementi jih bolj povezujejo z depoji sakralno-votivnega značaja, po drugih pa so bližji profanim. Kot že omenjeno so za zakope pogosto izb(i)rali izrazita mesta pod previsnimi stenami ali skalami (prim. Čerče, Turk 1996, 10; Blečić Kavur 2021; 545), prav tako je dokaj pogosto tudi odlaganje predmetov v skalne razpoke (prim. Čerče, Turk 1996, 11). Že tako posebna lega zakopov pod previsom Malega Gradca je še izrazitejša, ker leži najdišče hkrati nad kanjonom potoka Kozjak, katerega korita se zaključujejo z znamenitim slapom Veliki Kozjak. Na izravnavo pod skalnim previsom je vezana pripoved domačinov o kurjenju kresov, mitsko krajino celotnega podkranskega prostora pa poudarja tudi trdoživa tradicija drežniškega pustovanja (prim. Kuret 1984, 393–395). Da bi v tem primeru lahko šlo za posamezne zakope na posebnem, svetem mestu v naravi, nakazuje tudi heterogenost najdb oz. skupkov odloženih predmetov z vidnim prepletom profanega in votivnega. Med votivnimi najdbami sicer izstopa "obredna" lopatka (paleta), a ne smemo spregledati niti odkritij dragocenega zlatega lističa in železnodobne keramike, ki verjetno predstavljajo dele odloženih oziroma darovanih skupkov. Na zabrisanost zamejitve med profanimi in votivnimi depoji kažeta tudi depoja I in II s pretežno metalurškimi izdelki (polizdelki, pogače, ingoti ...), ki pa jih prav tako lahko obravnavamo kot produkt nekega znanja, "ritualnega" postopka, ki ga je tedaj obvladovala zgolj peščica posameznikov.

Nasprotno bi profanost drežniških zakopov lahko nakazovala lega v skalnih špranjah, ki je dovoljevala naknaden izkop, prav tako je bila pri vseh zakopih odsotna žganina, ki se velikokrat pojavlja kot sled ritualnih aktivnosti.

Če posamično opazujemo depoja I in II, brez celostnega vpogleda v najdiščni kontekst, bi ju

<sup>13</sup> Za informacijo se zahvaljujem Federici Sacchetti.

<sup>14</sup> Najstarejše se pojavijo že v 10./9. st. pr. n. št. (prim. Sacchetti 2016, 315).

<sup>15</sup> Nezanemarljivo ostaja dejstvo, da med pridatki iz približno 10.000 raziskanih starejšeželeznodobnih žganih grobov iz Posočja tovrstnih lopatk ne poznamo.

opredelili kot "livarska" depoja z bolj ali manj razlomljenimi sekirami, predvsem uhatimi, in različnimi ingoti. Pri poskusu razlage tovrstnih depojev so ključne prav uhate sekire, ki so v času mlajše žarnogrobiščne dobe prispele z Apeninskega polotoka, na kar kaže tudi njihova koncentracija v zahodni in osrednji Sloveniji (Pavlin, Turk 2014, 44, sl. 19; P. Turk, Svetličič 2018, 28; Nanut 2018, sl. 11; Pavlin et al. 2024, 160, op. 28).<sup>16</sup> Lahko jih razumemo tudi kot polizdelke oziroma ingote, ker so pogosto slabo vlite, nedokončane, in kot kažejo kemične analize, z visokim deležem svinca v njihovi litini, zato so slabo uporabne in jih lahko vidimo tudi kot neke vrste predmonetarno sredstvo (Trampuž Orel 1996, 195–196; Teržan 1996, 251; Nanut 2018; P. Turk, Svetličič 2018, 28).<sup>17</sup>

## ZAKLJUČEK

Posočje je bilo v obdobjih pred bronasto dobo skromno poseljeno. V zadnjih dvajsetih letih je bilo odkritih veliko višinskih najdišč na planem iz končnega paleolitika ali starejšega mezolitika (prim. M. Turk 2007; M. Turk, Podobnik 2024, sl. 1), medtem ko je čas od konca mezolitika do srednje bronaste dobe zaenkrat izpričan le z nekaj posameznimi najdbami (prim. Mlinar 2011). Stalnejša poselitev na treh, za ta namen najbolj primernih legah (Most na Soči, Tolmin, Kobarid / Robič) se je oblikovala šele ob koncu srednje bronaste dobe, kar nakazuje predvsem najdišči Most na Soči in arheološki kompleks Sv. Volar – Turjeva jama pri Robiču. Do povečanja števila prebivalstva je tudi v Posočju prišlo v pozni

<sup>16</sup> Novo najdišče tovrstnih sekir je že omenjena ledina zahodno od Dobja pri Jerovci na Šentviški planoti (gl. t. 2: 7–11).

<sup>17</sup> Izsledki rezultatov kemijske analize bodo predstavljeni v samostojnem članku o najdišču.

bronasti dobi (mlajši del KŽG), ko se, tako kot drugod po Sloveniji, tudi tu pojavijo prva večja plana žgana grobišča. Največ raziskanih grobov je s tolminskega grobišča pod Kozlovim robom, v tem času pa so s pokopavanjem začeli tudi na mostarskem prazgodovinskem grobišču, na novo odkritem grobišču v Ladrah in morda tudi na kobariškem.<sup>18</sup> Iz KŽG je tudi največ posamično odkritih najdb, tako v bližini prazgodovinskih poti (planine Božca, Zapleč in Zaprikraj, Šentviška planota) kot v reki Soči. Za mlajše obdobje KŽG (in začetek železne dobe) so za ta prostor značilne depojske najdbe. Ob bok že objavljenim depojem s Kanalskega Vrha in iz Šempetra pri Gorici lahko postavimo novo odkritje depojev z najdišča Mali Gradec pri Drežnici. Dva (I in II) sodita v sklop depojev vrste Bologna, S. Francesco – Šempeter (po P. Turk 2018), značilnih za čas med 10. in 7. st. pr. n. št., tretjega (III) sestavljata bronasta skodela in lopatka, četrtega pa odlomek zlate pločevine. Za celostno razumevanje najdišča bo ob upoštevanju lege in heterogenosti zakopov treba počakati na rezultate kemijskih analiz predmetov, predvsem kar se tiče prvega in drugega depoja.

## Zahvale

Pri nastajanju članka bi se želel za strokovne nasvete zahvaliti Petru Turku (Narodni muzej Slovenije), Federici Sacchetti (Aix-Marseille University) in Bibi Teržan. Zahvala velja tudi najditelju Davidu Kapitanu za predajo najdb Tolminskemu muzeju in Mirku Kurinčiču za posredovane podatke o najdišču Mali Gradec in bližnjih lokacijah. Prav tako lepa hvala Jerici Brečić za izris večine predmetov ter izdelavo tabel in karte najdišč, Nataliji Grum, Manci Omahen in Teji Gerbec za izris ostalih predmetov.

<sup>18</sup> Več kot 1100 grobov, ki jih je izkopal Carlo Marchesetti, je še neobjavljenih. Gradivo hrani tržaški muzej Civico Museo di Antichità J.J. Winckelmann Trieste.

BIANCO PERONI, V. 1976, *Die Messer in Italien / I coltelli nell'Italia continentale*. – Prähistorische Bronzefunde VII/2.  
 BIANCO PERONI, V. 1994, *I pugnali nell'Italia Continentale*. – Prähistorische Bronzefunde VI/10.  
 BLEČIČ KAVUR, M. 2021, Kvarner u starijem željeznom dobu sjevernog Jadrana / Kvarner in the Early Iron Age of the northern Adriatic. – *Arheološki vestnik* 72, 533–550.  
 BRATINA, P. 1997, Robič, Sv. Volar. – *Varstvo spomenikov* 36, 196.  
 BRATINA, P. 2001a, Robič, Sv. Volar. – *Varstvo spomenikov* 38, 110.

BRATINA, P. 2001b, Volarje, Mrzli potok. – *Varstvo spomenikov* 38, 143.  
 BRATOŽ, R. 2001, Soča in prehodi čez reko v antiki. – *Goriški letnik* 27, 27–50.  
 BRESSAN, F. 1988–1989, Le valli del Natisone e la Kovačeva jama di Robič. – *Arheološki vestnik* 39–40, 519–527.  
 BREZIGAR, B., T. FABEC, T. NANUT 2026, Novo arheološko odkritje v Tolminu. – *SOČAsnik* 27/1, 43.  
 ČERČE, P., I. ŠINKOVEC 1995, Katalog depojev pozne bronaste dobe / Catalogue of Hoards of the Urnfield Culture. – V: Teržan (ur.) 1995, 129–232.

- ČERČE, P., P. TURK 1996, Depoji pozne bronaste dobe - najdiščne okoliščine in struktura najdb. - V: B. Teržan (ur.), *Depojske in posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe na Slovenskem II / Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia II*, Katalogi in monografije 30, 7-30.
- FOGOLARI, G. 1975, La preistoria delle Venezie. - V: *Popoli e civiltà dell'Italia antica* IV, 61-222.
- FRONTINI, P. 1991, L' aristocrazia nell'età del ferro: dati dai corredi funerari. - V: *Immagini di una aristocrazia dell'età del ferro nell'arte rupestre Camuna*, 89-108.
- FURLANI, U. 1996, Depojska najdba iz Šempetra pri Gorici / Il ripostiglio di San Pietro presso Gorizia. - V: B. Teržan (ur.), *Depojske in posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe na Slovenskem II / Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia II*, Katalogi in monografije 30, 73-88.
- GAMBACURTA, G. 1994, La paletta da Scaltenigo di Mirano: alcune considerazioni in margine alle palette nel Veneto preromano. - *Quaderni di archeologia del Veneto* X, 153-160.
- GERBEC, T., M. MLINAR 2011, Najdbe iz reke Soče in njenih pritokov. - V: *Arheologija danes* št. 2011/1, 7-9.
- GERBEC, T., M. MLINAR 2015a, Robič, Kobarid. - *Goriški letnik* 37-38, 397-398.
- GERBEC, T., M. MLINAR 2015b, Tolmin, reka Soča. - *Goriški letnik* 37-38, 406.
- JAKOB, Ch. 1995, *Metallgefäße der Bronze- und Hallstattzeit in Nordwest-, West- und Süddeutschland*. - *Prähistorische Bronzefunde* II/9.
- JAMNIK, P., B. BLAŽINA 2023, Je Turjeva jama nad reko Nadižo (na Kobariškem) bronastodobni obredni prostor plodnosti ali rodnosti? - *Annales* 33/1, 61-96.
- JEREB, M. 2016, *Die Bronzegefäße in Slowenien*. - *Prähistorische Bronzefunde* II/19.
- KNAVS, M., M. MLINAR 2005, Bronastodobna lončenina iz Turjeve jame v dolini Nadiže / Bronze Age pottery from Turjeva jama in the Nadiža Valley. - *Arheološki vestnik* 56, 59-72.
- KNIFIC et al. 2021 = T. Knific, B. Laharnar, M. Mlinar, M. Turk 2021, *V deželici Simona Rutarja: arheologija podkrnskega prostora*. *Katalog razstave*. - Tolmin.
- KURET, N. 1984, *Maske slovenskih pokrajín*. - Ljubljana.
- LAHARNAR, B. 2018, *V zaledju Svete Lucije*. Prispevek k arheološki topografiji Šentviške planote / In the hinterland of Sv. Lucija. A contribution to the archaeological topography of Šentviška planota. - V: M. Črešnar, M. Vinazza (ur.), *Srečanja in vplivi v raziskovanju bronaste in železne dobe na Slovenskem: zbornik prispevkov v čast Bibi Teržan*, 367-380. - Ljubljana.
- LAHARNAR, B., M. MLINAR 2011, Železnodobno grobišče v Jerovci na Šentviški planoti. - *Goriški letnik* 35, 9-32.
- MARCHESETTI, C. 1890, Sull'antico corso del fiume Isonzo. - *Atti del Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Trieste* 8, 185-221.
- MARCHESETTI, C. 1892, Relazioni sugli scavi preistorici eseguiti nel 1892. - *Bollettino della Società Adriatica di Scienze Naturali in Trieste* 13.
- MARCHESETTI, C. 1893, Scavi nella necropoli di S. Lucia presso Tolmino (1885-1892). - *Bollettino della Società Adriatica di Scienze Naturali in Trieste* 15, 3-336.
- MARCHESETTI, C. 1903, *I castellieri preistorici di Trieste e della regione Giulia*. - Trieste.
- MIHOVILIČ, K. 2003, Privjesak oblika ritualne lopatice iz Nezakcija. - *Opuscula Archaeologica* 27, 211-216.
- MLINAR, M. 2002, *Nove zanke svetolucijske uganke*. *Katalog razstave*. - Tolmin.
- MLINAR, M. 2006, Volče. - *Varstvo spomenikov* 39-41, 237-238.
- MLINAR, M. 2007, Soča in njeni arheološki zakladi. - *Goriška Mohorjeva družba*. *Koledar* 2008, 101-105.
- MLINAR, M. 2011, Archaeological exhibition. - V: D. Fortunat Černilogar (ur.), *The Soča region and its historical deposits: guide to the permanent exhibition of the Tolmin Museum*. - Tolmin.
- MLINAR, M. 2020, *Most na Soči. Arheološke raziskave v letih 2000-2016 na levem bregu Idrije / The 2000-2016 archaeological investigations on the left bank of Idrija*. - *Opera Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae* 43. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610504887>
- MLINAR, M. 2025, Kobariško med bronasto dobo in antiko. - V: M. Uršič (ur.), *Inter montes. Kobariška tisočletja*, 29-42. - Kobarid.
- MLINAR, M., J. HORVAT 2018, *Bovške arheološke zgodbe*. Zgibanka. - Tolmin.
- MLINAR, M., R. KLASINC 2001, Kamno. - *Varstvo spomenikov* 38, 50.
- MLINAR, M., G. RUTAR 2024, Gabrje. - *Goriški letnik* 48, 217-220.
- MLINAR, M., S. TECCO HVALA 2022, Poselitvena slika posoške/svetolucijske skupine - nova najdišča in spoznanja / Settlement in the Posoče/Sveta Lucija group - new sites and insights. - *Arheološki vestnik* 73, 397-469.
- MLINAR, M., M. TURK 2016, *Prapoti skozi praproti: arheološka topografija dolin Tolminke in Zadlaščice*. *Katalog razstave*. - Tolmin.
- MLINAR, M., T. GERBEC, B. LAHARNAR 2014, *Kot nekoč. Breginjski kot v arheoloških dobah*. *Katalog razstave*. - Tolmin.
- MLINAR, M., R. KLASINC, J. MAGDIČ 2024, *Poročilo o arheološki raziskavi - arheološkem testnem izkopu na Malem Gradcu pri Drežnici na zemljišču s parc. št. 2197/20, k. o. 2225 - Drežnica (24-0377 Drežnica - Mali Gradec-depo ATI)* (neobjavljeno / unpublished, hrani / kept by: Tolminski muzej in /and ZVKDS OE Nova Gorica).
- MLINAR et al. 2018 = M. Mlinar, B. Laharnar, M. Vidulli, A. Crismani 2018, *Stari bogovi obmolknejo. Šentviška planota v arheoloških dobah*. *Katalog razstave*. - Tolmin.
- MOOSLEITNER, F., L. PAULI, E. PENNINGER 1974, *Der Dürrnberg bei Hallein 2. Katalog der Grabfunde aus der Hallstatt- und Latènezeit*. - *Münchner Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte* 17.
- NANUT, T. 2018, Poznobronasto- in železnodobni depojski najdbi iz Dolenjih Raven na Cerkljanskem in s Sv. Jakob na Kanalskem Kolovratu / Late Bronze and Iron Age hoard finds from Dolenje Ravne near Cerklno and Sv. Jakob on the Kanalski Kolovrat. - V: M. Črešnar, M. Vinazza (ur.), *Srečanja in vplivi v raziskovanju bronaste in železne dobe na Slovenskem: zbornik prispevkov v čast Bibi Teržan*, 137-162. - Ljubljana.
- PAULI, L. 1978, *Der Dürrnberg bei Hallein III*. - *Münchner Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte* 18.

- PAVLIN, P. 1995, Turjeva jama pri Robiču / Turjeva jama near Robič. – V: Čerče, P., I. Šinkovec, Katalog depojev pozne bronaste dobe / Catalogue of Hoards of the Urnfield Culture, *Depojske in posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe na Slovenskem I / Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia I*, Katalogi in monografije 29, 29–127.
- PAVLIN, P. 2023, Tipologija, kronologija in razprostranjenost bronastodobnih jezičastoročajnih srpov v jugovzhodni Evropi / Typology, chronology, and distribution of Bronze Age tanged sickles in South-Eastern Europe. – Opera Instituti Archaeologici Sloveniae 44. <https://doi.org/10.3986/9789610507048>
- PAVLIN, P., P. TURK 2014, Starjšeeželeznodobna depoja z Gobavice nad Mengštem / Two Early Iron Age hoards from Gobavica above Mengeš. – *Arheološki vestnik* 65, 35–78.
- PAVLIN et al. 2024 = P. Pavlin, P. Turk, R. Urankar, D. Josipovič 2024, Starejšeeželeznodobni depo z Jelenovega klanca v Kranju / The Early Iron Age hoard from Jelenov klanec in Kranj. – *Arheološki vestnik* 75, 151–212.
- PESSINA, A. 2007, Presenze di età preistorica nel Friuli Orientale / Prazgodovina vzhodne Furlanije. – V: G. Banchig, S. Magnani in A. Pessina, (ur.), *Terre d'incontro. Contatti e scambi lungo le Valli del Natisone e dell'Isonzo dall'antichità al medioevo / Kraji srečanj. Stiki in izmenjave vzdolž Nadiških in Soške doline od antike do srednjega veka*, 108–121. – Cividale del Friuli/Čedad.
- POGAČNIK, A. 2002, Način pokopa in analiza pridatkov / The Burial Ritual and the Analysis of the Grave Goods. – V: D. Svoljšak, A. Pogačnik 2002, 21–84.
- PRÜSSING, G. 1991, *Die Bronzegefäße in Österreich. – Prähistorische Bronzefunde II/5*.
- RUTAR, S. 1890, Prazgodovinska in po rimska razkopavanja Slovenskem leta 1889. – *Letopis Matice Slovenske za leto 1890*, 117–130.
- RUTAR, S. 1891, Prazgodovinske in rimske izkopine po Slovenskem I. 1891. – *Letopis Matice Slovenske za leto 1891*, 182–209.
- SACCHETTI, F. 2016, Funerary practices and sacerdotal rank in pre-Roman northern and central Italy: new data for interpreting the 'ritual shovel'. – *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 29, 313–326.
- SVOLJŠAK, D. 1988–1989, Posočje v bronasti dobi (Das Sočagebiet in der Bronzezeit). – *Arheološki vestnik* 39–40, 367–386.
- SVOLJŠAK, D. 2002, Arheološka topografija Tolmina in neposredne okolice / The archaeological topography of Tolmin and the immediate vicinity. – V: D. Svoljšak, A. Pogačnik 2002, 7–10.
- SVOLJŠAK, D., A. POGAČNIK 2001, *Tolmin. Prazgodovinsko grobišče I. Katalog / Tolmin, the prehistoric cemetery II. Catalogue*. – Katalogi in monografije 34.
- SVOLJŠAK, D., A. POGAČNIK 2002, *Tolmin. Prazgodovinsko grobišče II. Razprave / Tolmin, the prehistoric cemetery II. Treatises*. – Katalogi in monografije 35.
- ŠINKOVEC, I. 1996, Posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe / Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages. – V: B. Teržan (ur.), *Depojske in posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe na Slovenskem II / Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia II*, Katalogi in monografije 30, 125–163.
- ŠKVOR JERNEJČIČ, B., M. VINAZZA 2016, Burial practices and burial rites between the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in Slovenia. A comparative analysis of Ljubljana and Tolmin cemeteries. – V: T. Cividini, G. Tasca (ur.), *Il funerario in Friuli e nelle regioni contermini tra l'età del ferro e l'età tardoantica. Atti del convegno internazionale (San Vito al Tagliamento, 14 Febbraio 2013) / The Funerary in Friuli and surrounding Regions between Iron Age and Late Antiquity. Proceedings of the International Conference. BAR International Series 2795*, 41–62.
- ŠTULAR, B. 2011, Uporaba modelov reliefa pridobljenih z lidarskim snemanjem v arheološki topografiji / The use of lidar-derived relief models in archaeological topography. The Kobarid region (Slovenia) case study. – *Arheološki vestnik* 62, 393–432.
- TASCA, G. 2017, Le asce tipo Teor nel Bronzo finale del Caput Adriae. – V: M. Cupitò, M. Vidale, A. Angelini (ur.), *Beyond limits. Studi in onore di Giovanni Leonardi*. Antenor, Quaderni 39, 481–487.
- TASCA, G. 2020, Materiali dell'età del bronzo della Grotta di Robič conservati nel Museo Friulano di Storia Naturale di Udine. – *Gortania. Geologia, Paleontologia, Paleontologia* 41, 2019, 117–146.
- TERŽAN, B. (ur.) 1995, *Depojske in posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe na Slovenskem I / Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia I*. Katalogi in monografije 29.
- TERŽAN, B. 1996, Sklepna beseda / Conclusion. – V: B. Teržan (ur.), *Depojske in posamezne kovinske najdbe bakrene in bronaste dobe na Slovenskem II / Hoards and Individual Metal Finds from the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages in Slovenia II*, Katalogi in monografije 30, 243–258.
- TERŽAN, B. 1999, Oris obdobja kulture žarnih grobišč na Slovenskem / An Outline of the Urnfield Culture Period in Slovenia. – *Arheološki vestnik* 50, 97–143.
- TERŽAN, B. 2002, Kronološki oris / Chronological outline. – V: D. Svoljšak, A. Pogačnik 2002, 85–102.
- TERŽAN, B. 2016, Škocjan – kraj na stičišču svetov. Povzetek in sklepna beseda / Škocjan – at the meeting point of worlds. Summary and conclusion. – V: B. Teržan, E. Borgna in P. Turk (ur.), *Depo iz Mušje jame pri Škocjanu na Krasu. Depojske najdbe bronaste in železne dobe na Slovenskem 3 / Il ripostiglio della Grotta delle Mosche presso San Canziano del Carso. Ripostigli delle età del bronzo e del ferro in Slovenia 3*. – Katalogi in monografije 42, 345–430.
- TERŽAN, B., N. TRAMPUŽ 1976, Prispevek h kronologiji svetolucijske skupine. – *Arheološki vestnik* 24, 416–460.
- TRAMPUŽ OREL, N. 1996, Spektrometrične raziskave depojskih najdb pozne bronaste dobe / Spectrometric Research of the Late Bronze Age Hoard Finds. – V: B. Teržan 1996 (ur.), 165–242.
- TURK, M. 2007, Siti del mesolitico nella catena montuosa del Monte Nero / Mezolitska najdišča v Krnskem pogorju. – V: G. Banchig, S. Magnani, A. Pessina (ur.), *Terre d'incontro. Contatti e scambi lungo le Valli del Natisone e dell'Isonzo dall'antichità al medioevo / Kraji srečanj. Stiki in izmenjave vzdolž Nadiških in Soške doline od antike do srednjega veka*, 34–49. – Cividale del Friuli/Čedad.
- TURK, M., T. PODOBNIK 2024, Leskovca I in II, plani najdišči kamnitih artefaktov na planini Leskovca v

- Krnskem pogorju / Leskovca I and II, Stone Age open-air sites on the Leskovca alp in the Krn mountains. – *Arheološki vestnik* 75, 7–38.
- TURK, P. 2018, Early Iron Age Hoards from central and western Slovenia. – V: E. Borgna, P. Cassola Guida, S. Corazza (ur.), *Preistoria e Protostoria del Caput Adriae, Studi di preistoria e protostoria* 5, 397–406.
- TURK, P., V. SVETLIČIČ 2018, Nenavadna prazgodovina uhatih sekir. – V: M. Črešnar, M. Vinazza (ur.), *Srečanja in vplivi v raziskovanju bronaste in železne dobe na Slovenskem: zbornik prispevkov v čast Bibi Teržan*, 25–38. – Ljubljana.
- TURK, P., M. TURK 2019, *Najstarejše zgodbe s stičišča svetov*. – Ljubljana.
- TURK, P., V. SVETLIČIČ, D. PAVLOVIČ 2023, *Dragomelj*. – Zbirka Arheologija na avtocestah Slovenije 106. [https://www.zvkds.si/wpcontent/uploads/2024/04/aas\\_106\\_dragomelj\\_splet.pdf](https://www.zvkds.si/wpcontent/uploads/2024/04/aas_106_dragomelj_splet.pdf)
- VEDALDI IASBEZ, V. 1996, Una nuova aretta votiva all'Aesontius. – *Aquileia nostra* 67, 109–136.
- VISENTINI, P. 2020, La grotta di Robič e la nascita della Sezione Paleontologica ed Antropologica del Museo Friulano di Storia Naturale di Udine. – *Gortania. Geologia, Paleontologia, Paleontologia* 41, 107–116.
- ZUFFA, M. 1956–1957, Le palette rituali in bronzo: contributo alla conoscenza dell'età del ferro in Italia. – *Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Provincie di Romagna*, n.s. 8, 68–170.

## New evidence on the Bronze Age in the region of Posočje

### Translation

Posočje in the Bronze Age did not witness the level of prosperity as noted later, in the Early Iron Age, but its inhabitants are nevertheless to be credited with establishing all three main settlement cores of the region, located at present-day Most na Soči, Tolmin and Kobarid / Robič.

The first, albeit few Late Bronze Age (Ha B) finds already came to light towards the end of the 19th century, when Carlo Marchesetti, an archaeologist from Trieste, conducted systematic investigations of the extensive Iron Age cemetery at Most na Soči (Marchesetti 1893, 174, Pls 22: 20,25; 27: 7; cf. Teržan 2002, 89). Interestingly, Josef Szombathy excavated the same cemetery at roughly the same time, but recorded no Bronze Age finds (cf. Teržan 2002, Note 29). In Tolmin, graves from the Urnfield period were excavated during the investigations of the prehistoric cemetery below Kozlov rob in the late 1960s and early 1970s, conducted by the Goriški muzej under the direction of Drago Svoljšak (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001; Teržan 2002, 86–89, 91–94; Škvor Jernejčič, Vinazza 2016, 50–51, Fig. 8). During the early phase of archaeological excavations in the region, research focused on cemeteries, whereas investigation of settlement remains was all but non-existent. We should only mention the archaeological survey (or trial trenching?) that Carlo Marchesetti conducted in the prehistoric hillfort at Sv. Volar near Robič, which provided the first evidence of Bronze Age settlement in the region (Marchesetti 1890, 215–216; 1892, 14).

An evaluation of the research on the Bronze Age in Posočje and its results from the beginnings to the late 1980s has already been published, by Drago Svoljšak. He also excavated unique building remains from the late part of the Middle Bronze Age at Most na Soči and thus placed the site on the list of Bronze Age settlements (Svoljšak 1988–1989, Fig. 7).

This article supplements Svoljšak's overview and presents the sites and finds unearthed across Posočje later, in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Fig. 1). Most of the finds are stray. The most prominent of the archaeologically investigated sites is Repelc in Most na Soči, which a team of the Tolmin Museum excavated in 2000 and 2002 (Mlinar 2002, 21, Fig. 12; 2020).

### SETTLEMENTS

Excavations conducted in 2000 at Repelc, on the left bank of the Idrijca in Most na Soči, predominantly revealed cremation burials from the Iron Age and the Roman period. This was expected as the site lies in a previously known area of a prehistoric cemetery. What was not expected was a settlement layer with patches of dark brown to red-brown burnt loam, remains of poorly fired ochre-coloured clay daub, scattered charcoal, compacted marl debris, horizontally laid slabs of reddish and grey marl, the remains of two postholes and prehistoric pottery sherds (Fig. 2). Modest remains of a burnt

loam layer with charcoal, burnt marl pieces, as well as black and red-brown fired pottery were also found at this site during the investigations in 2002. These remains are interpreted as traces of a settlement and dated, primarily on the results of the pottery analysis, to BA D of the Central European chronology (*Pl. 1: 1–7*) or *Bronzo recente* of the Italian chronology (Mlinar 2020, 39, Pl. 15A: 1,3,5–9), partly also to the initial phase of the Early Iron Age (Mlinar 2020, Pl. 15A: 2, 4). The discovery of settlement remains on the left bank of the Idrijca at Most na Soči thus brings a novel insight into the Bronze Age settlement of Most na Soči, previously only known on the right bank (Svoljšak 1988–1989, 369–371). The postholes documented at Repelc suggest a similar construction technique as that of the Bronze Age house on the right bank of the Idrijca, built with wooden posts not resting on stone foundations (Svoljšak 1988–1989, 371, Figs 3, 4).

The finds from the hillfort on Sv. Volar, a foothill of Mount Mija/Mia on the right bank of the Nadiža near Robič show that the area of Kobarid was also settled on a more permanently basis towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age.<sup>1</sup> The settlement was established on a rocky levelling of the hill that enjoys a favourable geostrategic and naturally protected location above a river bend. Carlo Marchesetti excavated here in the late 19th century and found pottery, animal bones and bronze objects (Marchesetti 1890, 215–216; 1892, 14; Rutar 1891, 206). Simon Rutar, a historian of the Tolmin area, was the first to document a double rampart of this settlement, which he dated to the Roman period (Rutar 1890, 127; cf. Štular 2011). At the end of the 20th century, metal detectorists visited the site and found a Late Bronze Age spear butt or chisel (Bratina 1997, 196; 2001a, 110) and a bronze winged axe with centrally positioned wings (*Pl. 1: 8*) from Ha A (Mlinar, Gerbec, Laharnar 2014, 27, Cat. No. 3; Gerbec, Mlinar 2015a, 397, 398).

The excavated prehistoric cremation graves below Kozlov rob in Tolmin (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001; cf. Teržan 2002, 86–89, 91–94; Škvor Jernejčič, Vinazza 2016, 50–51, Fig. 8) show that the Tolmin area was also settled towards the end of the Bronze Age. The exact location of the main settlement, however, long remained elusive de-

spite indications and finds of prehistoric pottery (cf. Svoljšak 2002, 7). This changed in 2025 with the discovery of a settlement layer containing prehistoric pottery that points to the location of this settlement at Petelinec, a sunlit levelling on the southern slope of Kozlov rob, at the western edge of Tolmin (Brezigar, Fabec, Nanut 2026, 43).

## WATER FINDS

The Soča and its tributaries shaped both the landscape and the lives of the people who lived beside it. It represented a regular source of food and water, a means for floating timber, in different archaeological periods even a physical barrier for the peoples advancing towards the Apennine Peninsula from the east. The archaeological finds from the river and its gravel beds show that it also played an important role in the spiritual world of the inhabitants, who made offerings that involve a variety of objects, primarily weapons. Most of these objects date to the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. There were likely specific spots along the river where people would make offerings. Such a spot may have been located in the stretch of the riverbank between Kobarid and Tolmin, where the greatest number of Bronze Age weapons, mainly axes and spearheads, has come to light (Mlinar 2007; Gerbec, Mlinar 2011, 7–9). Other water finds from Slovenia are likewise dominated by weapons, especially swords and daggers, but also spearheads and axes (Šinkovec 1996, Fig. 18). Such offerings may therefore be interpreted in the context of rites of symbolic purification after killing or battle (Teržan 1996, 255; 1999, 124, 142). The bronze axes recovered from the Soča are all winged: one was found in the gravel on the right bank at Peršeti near Volče (Mlinar 2006, 237–238), one with centrally positioned wings was recovered from Mrzli potok, a left tributary of the Soča near Selišča (Bratina 2001b, 143), and the most recent was found in the gravel of the Soča below Berje near Gabrje (*Fig. 3; Pl. 1: 9*). Archaeologist Gašper Rutar found this last axe in 2018, among large stones in a gravel deposit, and brought it to the Tolmin Museum. It is complete and undamaged, suggesting it was deposited near the findspot (Mlinar, Rutar 2024). The axe is of a Late Bronze Age form (cf. P. Turk, M. Turk 2019, Fig. 238: 3), more precisely the Teor type that is largely limited to the area between the Rivers Livenza and Soča (Tasca 2017, Fig. 2).

<sup>1</sup> Further evidence is the Bronze Age pottery from the nearby cave of Turjeva jama (see the section on cave sites below).

Also of a Late Bronze Age form are the two spearheads found near the bridge at Kamno (Mlinar, Klasinc 2001, 50) and during gravel separation at Na Dolinah near Volče<sup>2</sup> (*Pl. 2: 1*) (Gerbec, Mlinar 2015b, 406). The Soča represented much more than merely a source of water not only in the Bronze Age, but also in the Iron Age, while its cult aspect is further underlined by two stone altars from the Roman period, with inscriptions dedicated to its deity Aesontius, found along the lower reaches of the river (cf. Vedaldi Iasbez 1996; Bratož 2001, 32–33).

### COMMUNICATIONS

Numerous objects came to light on mountain passes or slopes, which can be interpreted as items lost, deposited or offered, some also associated with transhumant pastoralism (cf. Šinkovec 1996, 161). In Posočje, the first finds of this nature came to light long ago. One such find is a bronze solid-hilted sword found at Strmec at Predel (Svoljšak 1988–1989, 367, Fig. 1). Another example is a bronze winged axe unearthed more than a century ago on the slopes of Stol above the village of Sedlo and deposited or lost along the shortest route between Breginjnski kot and the Bovško area, which led across the Božca alp towards Žaga; it is kept in the Museo d'Antichità J. J. Winckelmann in Trieste (Marchesetti 1893, 319; 1903, 89; Svoljšak 1988–1989, 367, Fig. 2: 1).<sup>3</sup>

Also on the slopes of Stol, Marko Komac found a bronze socketed axe (*Pl. 2: 2*) at a watering place on the Božca alp. It is an axe with a missing loop, a thickened mouth and a slight step at the socket-blade junction that suggests a dating to the late part of the Urnfield period. Socketed axes spread into Posočje in the Late Bronze Age from the eastern parts of Europe. Many are decorated with a chevron motif, while the axe from Božca is among the rare examples with decoration imitating wings (cf. Šinkovec 1996, 136).

The object unearthed at the 1080 m high hill Murna glava (Prvi Hum), above the village of Žaga,

<sup>2</sup> The axe was found during gravel separation at the Doline plant of the Kolektor CPG construction company. Its primary findspot is unknown, but must have been one of the gravel extraction sites along the Soča between Kobarid and Tolmin.

<sup>3</sup> An unidentified person reportedly found a bronze winged axe at the Late Roman site of Selce above Zatoľmin, though its precise findspot and current location are unknown.

can also be viewed in the context of prehistoric communications between Breginjnski kot and the upper Soča valley or Bovško. It is a bronze dagger (*Pl. 2: 3*) with a diamond-sectioned blade and a pair of rivet holes in the flat tang, unearthed on the summit of the hill (Mlinar, Horvat 2018). In form, the dagger is similar to those of the Veruno type characteristic of the late part of the Middle Bronze Age, that is BA D/Ha A1 (cf. Bianco Peroni 1994, 80, Pl. 40: 627).

People in the Bronze Age also visited the vast areas of pastureland, still in this use today, located on the left bank of the Soča. Evidence of such visits is the chronologically poorly diagnostic sherds of Bronze Age pottery and a stone arrowhead found during the archaeological investigations at the Zaprikraj and Zappleč alps (M. Turk 2007, 44, Pl. 3: 11), which may be interpreted as traces of hunting activities (Knific et al. 2021, 31). Also originating from this area is a small and simple bronze knife (*Pl. 2: 4*) without close parallels, but typologically attributable to Ha A1/A2 (Knific et al. 2021, 31, Cat. No. 7).

In addition to being suitable for seasonal pasturing, the Bohinj–Tolmin mountain range, then forming an undivided unit, was of great importance for the local Iron Age population within the Sveta Lucija and the subsequent Idrija cultural groups also because of its rich iron ore deposits (cf. Mlinar, Turk 2016, 36–38). The passes already in use in prehistory include Globoko (*Fig. 1: 8*). On the Tolmin side of this pass, Primož Kos came across a bronze knife with a ring terminal (*Pl. 2: 6*), now kept in the Tolmin Museum. It is a Benvenuti type knife with an S-shaped triangular-sectioned blade such as are known from Este exclusively in the grave groups of the Este II phase, that is the 8th century BC (cf. Bianco Peroni 1976, 31–32, Pl. 11: 103–108).

The plateau of Šentviška planota (*Fig. 1: 1–3*) represented in prehistory a natural connection between Posočje and central Slovenia. Material evidence of communication across this plateau begins towards the end of the Bronze Age and shows it was especially important in the Iron Age. The stray finds that prove the existence of the communication, possibly also habitation on the plateau in the Bronze Age, include a fragment of a bronze sickle, a bronze knife and fragments of a bronze shaft-hole axe and bronze ingots.

One of the artefacts found on the plateau, more precisely at Vrh gradu near Pečine, is a fragment of a bronze tanged sickle (Mlinar et al. 2018, 26,

32, Cat. No. 1). Sickles and their fragments are among the most characteristic finds of the Urnfield culture (cf. Pavlin 2023). They were primarily agricultural tools, but could also have served as a means of pre-monetary exchange, while semantically a sickle was a symbol of fertility or a lunar symbol (cf. Teržan 2016, 386).

Vasja Seljak found a bronze knife (*Pl. 2: 5*) with a perforated flat handle ending in a split terminal decorated with punched dots at Podovnice, east of the sacred place at Berlotov rob. Its general characteristics suggest it belongs to the *Matrei* type according to the typology of Bianco Peroni, which is dated to the early phase of the Urnfield culture (Ha A1) and widespread on both sides of the Alps (Bianco Peroni 1976, 16, 18, Pl. 4: 24–37). A distinct feature on the example from Šentviška planota is the handle with a split semicircular terminal, which is similar in its semicircular form to a knife from the marshes near Pastrengo in Veneto (Bianco Peroni 1976, Pl. 4: 36), whereas the split is a unique feature. Because of its location near the known sacred place from the Iron Age, it is interpreted as a votive find.

Also on Šentviška planota, fragments of a bronze shaft-hole axe (*Pl. 2: 7*), biconical bronze ingots (*Pl. 2: 8–9*), a flat bronze ingot cast in a two-piece mould (*Pl. 2: 10*) and a fragment of a plano-convex ingot (*Pl. 2: 11*) were found scattered across a reclaimed terrace on the eastern slope of Vrh Ilovice; these may represent part of a single deposit – hoard.<sup>4</sup> The site lies southwest of the presumed Iron Age settlement at Dobje (Mlinar et al. 2018, 22–23, Fig. 18), with an associated flat cremation cemetery partly investigated in 2007 (Laharnar, Mlinar 2011). We should also mention the local oral tradition on the first settlement of Šentviška planota that is associated with the nearby area of Cuzelin near Bilšava (Laharnar 2018, 374).

## CEMETERIES

Recent Bronze Age discoveries include a flat cremation cemetery on the western edge of an area known as Na Goricah, which is a grassy plateau northwest of the Ladra village. The first find came to light here under an exposed root. It is a bronze spearhead with a faceted socket (*Pl. 2: 12*) that most likely represents a grave good from

a destroyed burial of a man from the late part of the Urnfield culture (Knific et al. 2021, 16, Cat. No. 8; Mlinar, Tecco Hvala 2022, 428, Pl. 1: 6). Although placing weapons in male graves was not customary in the Posočje region (cf. Teržan, Trampuž 1976, 418), similar spearheads also came to light in Grave 158 and in the fill between graves at the prehistoric cemetery in Tolmin (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001, 66, Pls 27: 10, 99: 17; Pogačnik 2002, 75). The other finds recovered from under the root belong to an Early Iron Age cremation burial of a woman (Knific et al. 2021, Cat. No. 8, top photograph) dating to the early 8th century BC (cf. Teržan 2002, 98–99).

The flat cremation cemetery can thus be attributed to the end of the Bronze Age and initial phase of the Iron Age Sveta Lucija group (Knific et al. 2021, 32; Mlinar, Tecco Hvala 2022, 428), as such joining the above-mentioned individual burials and artefacts from Tolmin (Svoljšak, Pogačnik 2001; Teržan 2002, 86–89, 91–94; Škvor Jernejčič, Vinazza 2016, 50–51, Fig. 8) and Most na Soči (Marchesetti 1893, 174, Pls 22: 20,25; 27: 7; cf. Teržan 2002, 89).

## CAVE SITES

Most of the finds from Turjeva Jama, a cave located on the southwestern foot of Sv. Volar near Robič, date to the Bronze Age. Research in the cave began in the late 19th century when Carlo Marchesetti conducted surveys here and found Bronze Age pottery and animal bones, as well as a bronze pin (needle) with an eye<sup>5</sup> (Rutar 1890, 127; Marchesetti 1903, 89–90, Note 3; Bressan 1988–1989, 519–527). In 1898, the cave was also examined by Achille Tellini, a member of the Friulian Speleological and Hydrological Society. He mentions finding a perforated cockle shell (*Cerastoderma edule*), which probably represents part of a necklace (Visentini 2020, 113–114; Jamnik, Blažina 2023, 66). Towards the end of the 20th century, the cave revealed metal (Čerče, Šinkovec 1995, 221–223, Pl. 142 A) and pottery finds (Knavs, Mlinar 2005, 59–72)<sup>6</sup> that are now kept in the Tolmin Museum. The bronze

<sup>5</sup> The finds are kept in the Museo Friulano di Storia Naturale di Udine and Museo d'Antichità J. J. Winckelmann di Trieste. The pottery dates from the late phase of *Bronzo medio* to the end of *Bronzo recente* (Tasca 2020, 140).

<sup>6</sup> The pottery is attributable to BA D and Ha A1 (Knavs, Mlinar 2005, 64; cf. Tasca 2020).

<sup>4</sup> See the section on the hoard finds and special natural settings.

artefacts include a fragment of a winged axe, two damaged tanged daggers and eight fragments of sickles.<sup>7</sup> Although some interpreted these finds as a hoard, i.e. deposited together for a specific purpose (Čerče, Šinkovec 1995, 221; Tasca 2020, 118), a re-examination of the find circumstances revealed that the objects were not all deposited and found in the same spot,<sup>8</sup> hence the assemblage is probably not a hoard in the classic sense. The objects also do not share the same dating and rather span from the 13th to the 11th centuries BC (cf. Tasca 2020, 118). The composition of all the finds recovered from Turjeva jama (pottery, metal objects, animal bones with cut marks), the deliberately broken pottery and the burn marks on the metal objects indicate that the cave very likely served as a place of offerings or cult activities (Mlinar, Gerbec, Laharnar 2014, 14), perhaps a ritual site connected with a fertility cult (Jamnik, Blažina 2023). Ritual activity at prehistoric cult sites is often associated with the deposition, fragmentation and burning of various objects. We may find confirmation of this interpretation in the information by Carlo Marchesetti, who reports finding a layer of earth containing charcoal, ash and pottery sherds (Marchesetti 1893; cf. Pessina 2007, 26). Additional Bronze Age finds were also collected during surveys in 2018 and 2022, including two ceramic loom weights, a bronze pin (needle) and a bronze ingot;<sup>9</sup> they are kept in the Tolmin Museum (Jamnik, Blažina 2023, 73–76, Fig. 6 b–f).

### HOARD FINDS AND SPECIAL NATURAL SETTINGS

In 2022, David Kapitan donated to the Tolmin Museum an assemblage of bronze artefacts that he had excavated in 2020, with the help of a metal detector, in a small rock shelter located on the south-eastern edge of Mali Gradec near Drežnica (toponym Pod skalo; Fig. 1: 14; 4). Part of the artefacts had been buried in two crevices and hence defined as Hoards I and II, the artefacts of Hoard III were found lying on a rocky ledge, while thin

sheet gold (Hoard IV) was found approximately 4 metres southeast of Hoard I, also in a rock crevice.<sup>10</sup>

Hoard I comprises a complete bronze shaft-hole axe, several large fragments of the upper and lower parts of other shaft-hole axes, a fragment of an extended butt of a bronze shaft-hole axe and numerous pieces of broken shaft-hole axes or ingots, a complete bronze winged axe, two fragments of bronze winged axes, three fragments of bar ingots and five fragments of bronze plano-convex ingots (Fig. 5). The finder reported that the complete shaft-hole axe lay at the top of the assemblage, under a roughly 20 cm thick fill of earth and stone debris. Under the shaft-hole axe was the complete winged axe and then all the fragments, which filled the crevice to a depth of 35 cm. There were small patches of soil and stone debris among the artefacts, which appeared of the same consistency as the fill of the crevice above and below the artefacts.

Hoard II lay some 120 cm northwest of Hoard I. It consists of two complete bronze winged axes, a complete bronze shaft-hole axe and several differently sized cut fragments of shaft-hole axes, a fragment of a sickle and two fragments of a bronze plano-convex ingot. According to the finder, the complete winged axes lay at the top of the assemblage, followed downward by the shaft-hole axe and the small bronze fragments at the bottom (Fig. 6).

Found northwest of Hoard II were a bronze bowl and a bronze spatula (palette) (Fig. 7).<sup>11</sup> The bowl was placed on a rocky ledge and covered with a small semicircular stone, covered in turn with sharp-edged gravel. The spatula was placed upright next to the vessel, with its blade stuck into the loam. This assemblage was identified as Hoard III.

Roughly 4 metres southeast of Hoard I, two conjoining pieces of thin sheet gold came to light in a rock crevice. Although consisting of a single object, the find context, the valuable material and the assumption of the sheet originally being sewn onto (unpreserved) fabric suggest we may consider the sheet gold the remains of another, Hoard IV.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The recovered artefacts include an unknown number of ingots, which the finder left in the cave (cf. Čerče, Turk 1996, Note 33).

<sup>8</sup> Pavlin already noted that the two bronze daggers were found somewhat apart from the other artefacts (Pavlin 1995, 222; see also Tasca 2020).

<sup>9</sup> It may be one of the objects that the finder of the 'hoard' left in the cave (see Note 7).

<sup>10</sup> Preliminary results are published in Mlinar 2025, 36; the site will be published together with a catalogue of finds in a separate article.

<sup>11</sup> The finder collected two sherds of hand-built pottery from a crevice roughly a metre north of Hoard III, the appearance and fabric of which point to a date in the Iron Age.

<sup>12</sup> The standard definition of a hoard is that of a group of two or more objects intentionally hidden, buried or placed

Archaeologists from the Tolmin Museum and the Skupina Stik company investigated the site in 2024 to verify the findspots and reconstruct the precise location of the hoards. We also excavated test pits at the site, but they were archaeologically negative (Mlinar, Klasinc, Magdič 2024).

The first two hoards, named Drežnica – Mali Gradec I and II, are related to the hoards of the Bologna, S. Francesco – Šempeter type consisting exclusively of bronze objects, among them numerous fragments of winged axes and a substantial proportion of shaft-hole axes and ingots, with the objects (usually) deposited within Early Iron Age settlements (cf. P. Turk 2018).

These hoards, found almost exclusively in western Slovenia and north-eastern Italy (Nanut 2018, Fig. 11), are the result of a prolonged deposition of objects (P. Turk 2018). In composition, the Drežnica – Mali Gradec I and II hoards are similar to those from Jelenov klanec in Kranj (Pavlin et al. 2024) and from Malinica near Klana (Blečić Kavur 2021, 545), the Iron Age hoard from Dragomelj (P. Turk, Svetličič, Pavlovič 2023, 116–125), the two hoards from Gobavica near Mengeš (Pavlin, Turk 2014), the hoard from Gastabil near Dolenje Ravne in the Cerklje region (Nanut 2018, 139–141) and the hoard from Šempeter pri Gorici (Furlani 1996).

The typological and stylistic characteristics of the items from the Drežnica – Mali Gradec I and II hoards indicate a chronological range from the 10th to the 8th centuries BC, suggesting the objects were last buried in the 8th century BC.

The composition of the Drežnica – Mali Gradec III hoard is different, as is the dating that is later than Hoards I and II. It consists of two intentionally deposited objects, a bronze bowl and a spatula. Such a combination of objects has no parallels in Slovenia, but is documented in the Golasecca culture.<sup>13</sup>

In form and the incised motif of hatched hanging triangles (wolf teeth), the bowl with a high strap handle has parallels from the cemetery at Dürrenberg near Hallein in Austria (Moosleitner, Pauli, Penninger 1974, Pl. 132; Prüssing 1991, 22, Pl. 4: 25,26), which date to Ha D3 (Pauli 1978, 343), while similar vessels from Germany have been attributed to Ha C (Jakob 1995, Pl. 8: 42–43). A few similar vessels are known from Dolenjska,

though they are lower and identified as dishes rather than bowls (cf. Jereb 2016, Pl. 139: 307,308).

In the south-eastern Alpine area, the bronze spatula (palette) with a ring terminal of the handle has only two parallels, both from the hoard unearthed at Šempeter pri Gorici (Furlani 1996, 85–86, Fig. 4: 10). Between the 7th and the 4th century BC, such spatulas appear in hoards, sanctuaries and especially in the graves of the Venetic culture, of the Golasecca culture and of the Etruscans<sup>14</sup> (Zuffa 1956–1957, 73–74; Fogolari 1975, 183; Frontini 1991, 105; Mihovilič 2003, 211; Sacchetti 2016, 320). Their purpose is not entirely clear. Some scholars link them with agricultural and fertility cults, citing the Greek historian Theopompus who wrote that the Veneti offered sacrificial cakes to crows in the sowing season – this may be the association of such a spatula (Fogolari 1975, 176). Others interpret these objects as spatulas for gathering ash in a ritual connected with the domestic hearth or associate them with weaving (cf. Mihovilič 2003, 211–212). Giovanna Gambacurta sees votive spatulas from female burials as markers of the special status of a deceased woman within the community, as a leader or *mater familias* (Gambacurta 1994, 158). For regions where cremation was practised in the Early Iron Age, among them also Posočje, Federica Sacchetti proposed that such items were used in the funerary ritual for collecting the cremated remains of the deceased or the burnt bones of sacrificial animals (Sacchetti 2016, 320–321).<sup>15</sup>

In its form and ring terminal, the spatula from the Drežnica – Mali Gradec III hoard corresponds to Variant C of Zuffa typology, characteristic of the area of the Etruscan city of Chiusi (Zuffa 1956–1957, Fig. 1: C), while the shape of its bowl appears similar to some of the examples from Veneto (cf. Gambacurta 1994, 157–158, Fig. 4).

The interpretation of the Drežnica – Mali Gradec hoards is not straightforward. There are some elements that tie them to the hoards of a sacred – votive nature, while others point towards a more profane character. As already noted, people commonly chose conspicuous places under overhanging rocks or rock faces to bury objects (cf. Čerče, Turk 1996, 10; Blečić Kavur 2021; 545),

<sup>14</sup> The earliest already appear in the 10th/9th century BC (cf. Sacchetti 2016, 315).

<sup>15</sup> Having said that, we should bear in mind that the grave goods from some 10,000 Early Iron Age cremation graves excavated across Posočje revealed no such spatulas.

for various reasons in pits, rock crevices or elsewhere and distinguishable from individual finds (Čerče, Turk 1996, 7).

<sup>13</sup> I thank Federica Sacchetti for the information.

frequently also in rock crevices (cf. Čerče, Turk 1996, 11). The position of the deposits under the overhang at Mali Gradec is further emphasised by the fact that the site lies above the canyon of the Kozjak stream, the beds of which terminate in the well-known waterfall of Veliki Kozjak. There is also a local oral tradition associated with the levelling under the overhang that is linked with lighting bonfires, while the mythical landscape of the area below Mount Krn is underscored by the enduring tradition of the Drežnica carnival (cf. Kuret 1984, 393–395). The possible interpretation as individual deposits buried in a special, sacred place in nature is also supported by the heterogeneity of the buried objects and assemblages with a clear intertwining of the profane and the votive. Standing out among the votive finds is the ‘ritual’ spatula (palette), though we should not disregard the pieces of precious sheet gold and the Iron Age pottery that likely also represent parts of deposited or offered assemblages. The blurred distinction between profane and votive hoards is also evident in Hoards I and II, consisting largely of metallurgical products (part-finished objects, plano-convex and other ingots), which may likewise be seen as products of specialised knowledge and ‘ritual’ process that only a handful of people could master at that time.

In contrast, the location of the Drežnica – Mali Gradec hoards in rock crevices might suggest a profane character, as it allows for later retrieval. There is also the absence of burnt remains, which are often present as a trace of ritual activities.

If Hoards I and II are considered in isolation, without the broader context of the site, they could be defined as ‘foundry’ hoards containing more or less fragmented axes, mainly shaft-hole examples, and various ingots. The key element in attempting to interpret such hoards are the shaft-hole axes, which arrived to this area during the Late Urnfield period from the Italian Peninsula, as also indicated by their concentration in western and central Slovenia (Pavlin, Turk 2014, 44, Fig. 19; P. Turk, Svetličič 2018, 28; Nanut 2018, Fig. 11; Pavlin et al. 2024, 160, Note 28).<sup>16</sup> They can also be understood as part-finished products or ingots, given that they are often poorly cast, unfinished and, as chemical analyses show, contain a high proportion of lead in their alloy,

<sup>16</sup> A new findspot of such axes is the already mentioned site west of Dobje near Jerovca on Šentviška planota (see *Pl.* 2: 7–11).

making them unsuitable for use and likely used as pre-monetary currency (Trampuž Orel 1996, 195–196; Teržan 1996, 251; Nanut 2018; P. Turk, Svetličič 2018, 28).<sup>17</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The Posočje region was sparsely settled in the periods before the Bronze Age. Over the last two decades, early habitation traces have come to light at many high-altitude open-air sites dating to the Late Palaeolithic or Early Mesolithic periods (cf. M. Turk 2007; M. Turk, Podobnik 2024, Fig. 1), while human presence in the time from the end of the Mesolithic to the Middle Bronze Age is currently only attested by a handful of stray finds (cf. Mlinar 2011). The remains from Most na Soči and the archaeological complex at Sv. Volar – Turjeva jama near Robič show that more permanent settlement in the three locations most suitable for human habitation, i.e. Most na Soči, Tolmin and Kobarid / Robič, began towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age. An increase in the population of Posočje occurred in the Late Bronze Age (late part of the Urnfield period), when the first large flat cremation cemeteries appeared here and elsewhere in Slovenia. Most numerous burials from this time were excavated below Kozlov rob in Tolmin, while other prehistoric cemeteries – at Most na Soči, in the newly found cemetery at Ladra and possibly at Kobarid – began in this period as well.<sup>18</sup> Most of the stray finds from the Bronze Age also date to its late part, i.e. the Urnfield period, unearthed in the vicinity of prehistoric lines of communication (the Božca, Zappleč and Zaprikraj alps, Šentviška planota) and in the River Soča. Characteristic of the late part of the Urnfield period (and beginning of the Iron Age) in this region are hoard finds. The newly-discovered Drežnica – Mali Gradec hoards joined the already published ones from Kanalski Vrh and Šempeter pri Gorici. The Drežnica – Mali Gradec I and II hoards belong to the Bologna, S. Francesco – Šempeter type (after P. Turk 2018), which are characteristic of the period

<sup>17</sup> The results of the chemical analysis will be presented in a separate article dedicated to the site.

<sup>18</sup> There are still more than 1100 graves excavated by Carlo Marchesetti that remain unpublished. The goods from these graves are kept in the Museo d’Antichità J.J. Winckelmann in Trieste.

between the 10th and 7th centuries BC, Hoard III comprises a bronze bowl and spatula, while Hoard IV consists of a sheet gold fragment. To gain a better understanding of the Mali Gradec site, we need to consider its location and the heterogeneity of individual assemblages, but also await the results of the chemical analyses of the objects, especially of Hoards I and II.

### Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Peter Turk (National Museum of Slovenia), Federica Sacchetti (Aix-Marseille University) and Biba Teržan for their comments offered while preparing this article. I also thank the finder of the hoards, David Kapitan, for handing the finds to the Tolmin Museum, and to Mirko Kurinčič for the information provided on the site of Mali Gradec and nearby locations. Sincere thanks go to Jerica Brečić for drawing most of the objects and preparing the plates and maps, to Natalija Grum, Manca Omahen and Teja Gerbec for drawing other artefacts presented in the article.

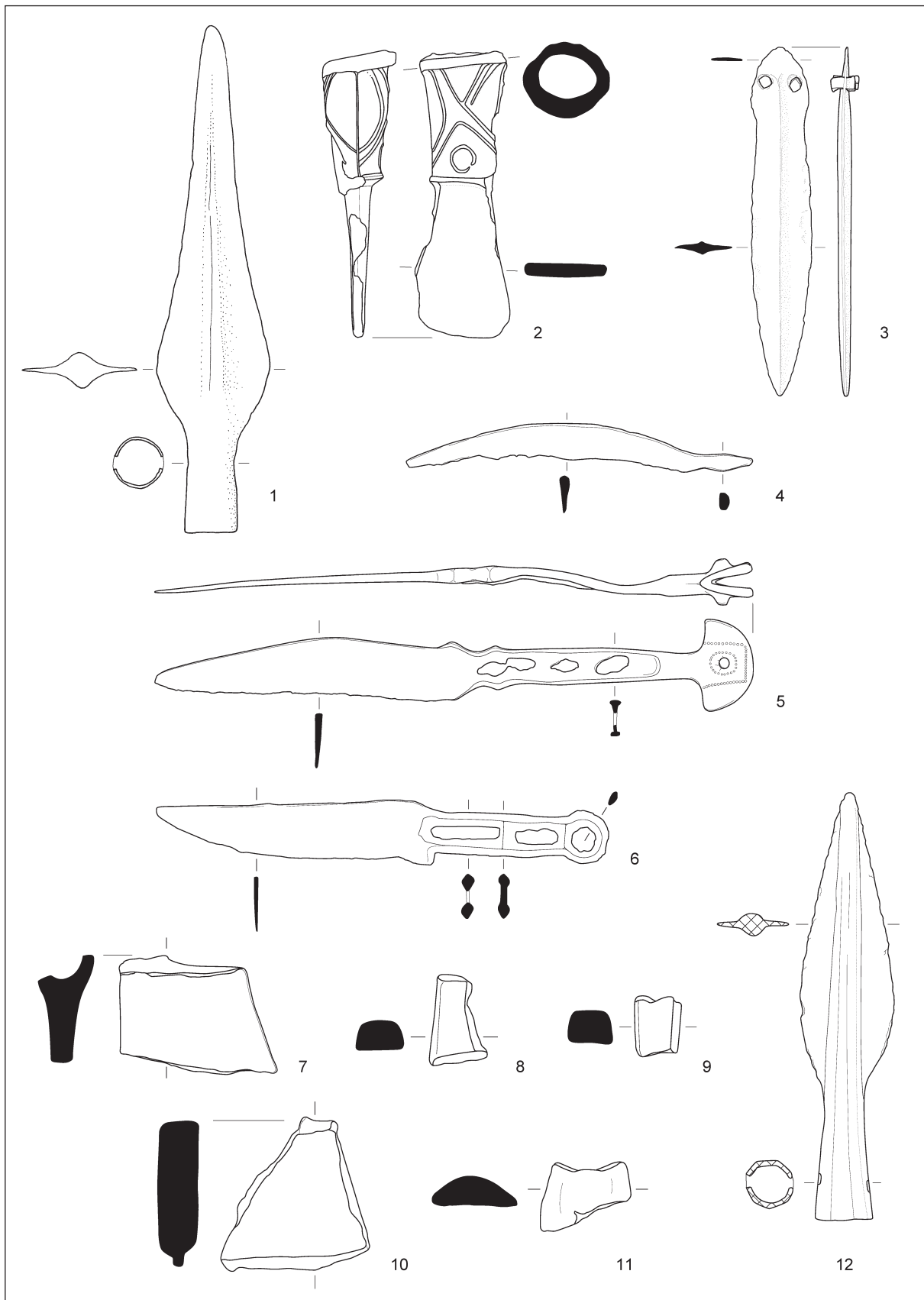
*Translation: Andreja Maver*

Miha Mlinar  
Tolminski muzej  
Mestni trg 4  
SI-5220 Tolmin  
miha.mlinar@tol-muzej.si.

*Slikovno gradivo:* Sl. 2 (foto: Drago Svoljšak, hrani Arhiv Tolminskega muzeja). – Sl. 3 (foto: Gašper Rutar, hrani Arhiv Tolminskega muzeja). – Sl. 4–7 (foto: Miha Mlinar, Tolminski muzej).

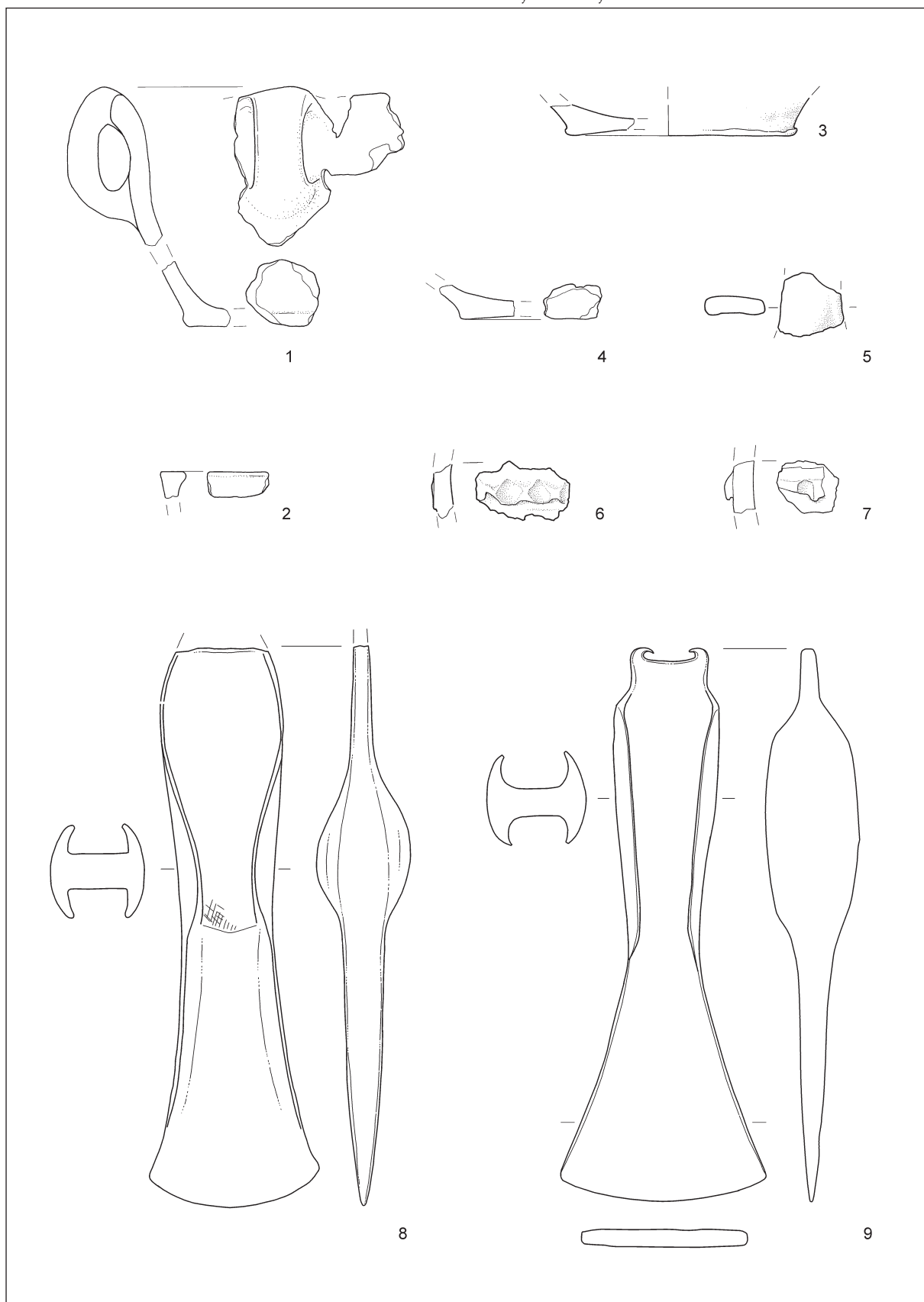
*Illustrations:* Fig. 2 (photo: Drago Svoljšak, kept by Archives of Tolminski muzej). – Fig. 3 (photo: Gašper Rutar, kept by Archives of Tolminski muzej). – Sl. 4–7 (photo: Miha Mlinar, Tolminski muzej).

Podatki, na katerih temelji ta članek, bodo na razumno zahtevo posredovani interesentu. / The data underlying this article will be shared on reasonable request to the corresponding author.



T. 1: 1-7 Most na Soči - Repelc; 8 Robič - Sv. Volar; 9 Gabrje - Berje, reka Soča. 1-7 keramika, 8-9 bron. M. 1-7 = 1 : 3, 8-9 = 1 : 2.

Pl. 1: 1-7 Most na Soči - Repelc; 8 Robič - Sv. Volar; 9 Gabrje - Berje, reka / River Soča. 1-7 pottery, 8-9 bronze. Scale 1-7 = 1:3, 8-9 = 1:2.



T. 2: 1 Volče, reka Soča; 2 Planina Božca; 3 Murna glava; 4 Planina Zapleč; 5 Šentviška Gora – Podovnice; 6 Prelaz Globoko; 7–11 Prapetno Brdo – Vrh Ilovce; 12 Ladra – Gorice. Vse bron. M. = 1 : 2.

Pl. 2: 1 Volče, reka / River Soča; 2 Planina Božca / Božca alp; 3 Murna glava; 4 Planina Zapleč / Zapleč alp; 5 Šentviška Gora – Podovnice; 6 Prelaz Globoko / Globoko pass; 7–11 Prapetno Brdo – Vrh Ilovce; 12 Ladra – Gorice. All bronze. Scale = 1:2.

