

*The reconstruction and analysis of the Late La Tène hoard  
of iron tools from Vrhovlje pri Kojskem above the Soča valley*

The village officially known as Vrhovlje pri Kojskem (Vrhovlje near Kojsko) is situated on the edge of the Goriška Brda (Collio Goriziano), hills in the west of Slovenia, not far from the main road Dobrovo-Šmartno-Plave, which connects the centre of the Brda with the Soča valley<sup>1</sup>. In the Late Iron Age the territory of the Soča river and of its tributaries, Tolminka, Idrijca and Vipava, was settled by the Idrija pri Bači group, one of the four La Tène groups in the territory of modern Slovenia<sup>2</sup>. The eponymous site of Idrija pri Bači in the Idrijca valley became well known at the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when Josef Szombathy, the curator of the Museum of Natural History in Vienna, published in 1901 the important cemetery that he had excavated in 1886 and 1887<sup>3</sup>. The cemetery comprises cremation graves from the late Hallstatt, La Tène and Early Roman periods and a single Late Roman inhumation. A notable characteristic of the rich La Tène and Early Roman period graves is the deposition of numerous bronze vessels and iron tools. The finds from the cemetery have figured in many publications of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, beginning with the famous handbook of Joseph Déchelette<sup>4</sup>.

Until 1991, when Mitja Guštin published an essentially basic work on the Idrija pri Bači group<sup>5</sup>, the archaeological evidence for this group consisted almost exclusively of grave finds and two hoards of iron tools. Since then our knowledge has been enriched by metal finds from some settlements and by the excavation of an important sanctuary lying on the Gradič hill above Kobarid in the Soča valley<sup>6</sup>. As well as objects belonging to the indigenous population, a considerable number of Roman weapons came to light at the settlements of Grad near Reka, Vrh gradu near Pečine and Gradišče in Cerkno, testifying to conflicts with the Roman army<sup>7</sup>.

The first published mention of the iron tool hoard discovered at Vrhovlje pri Kojskem in 1891 appeared in the Report to the Provincial Assembly of Gorizia and Gradisca county on the activity of the Provincial Committee for the same year, which was published in Gorizia in 1892<sup>8</sup>. This notification, however, gives no details of the types of tools or their number.

During the prolonged preparation of the book *Arheološka najdišča Slovenije – Archaeological Sites of Slovenia*, printed in 1975, the *Relazione alla Dieta Provinciale* (Report to the Provincial Assembly) from Gorizia was not included in the list of literature to be reviewed and excerpted, although it contained other reasonably accurate data on the archaeological discoveries in the Slovene part of Gorizia and Gradisca county before the First World War. This explains why Vrhovlje pri Kojskem, belonging to the commune of Kojsko, was not registered in the 1975 volume as an archaeological site<sup>9</sup>.

From 1881 to 1903 the director of the Provincial Museum of Gorizia was Professor Heinrich Maionica<sup>10</sup>, who was at the same time Director of the State Museum in Aquileia<sup>11</sup> and the conservator of the Central Commission for Monument Research and Conservation in Vienna. By 1902 he had succeeded in compiling an inventory of around ten thousand objects kept at the Museum, but the eight inventory books disappeared during the First World War<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> SVOLJŠAK 1999, p. 20 (map), site n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> BOŽIČ 1999a, p. 203, fig. 1.

<sup>3</sup> SZOMBATHY 1901.

<sup>4</sup> DÉCHELETTE 1927, p. 1127: Idria, près Baca.

<sup>5</sup> GUŠTIN 1991.

<sup>6</sup> OSMUK 1987; OSMUK 1997; OSMUK 1998.

<sup>7</sup> BOŽIČ 1999b; ISTENIČ 2005.

<sup>8</sup> *Relazione alla Dieta Provinciale* 1892, Allegato IV, p. 1: "In pari tempo l'infrascritta Direzione ebbe la compiacenza d'assicurare al nostro Museo altri pregevoli oggetti scoperti nella provincia, come gli antichi arnesi rurali in ferro scoperti a Vercoglie..." (= At the same time the undersigned direction had the satisfaction to acquire for our museum other worthwhile objects discovered in the province, like the ancient agricultural iron tools discovered at Vrhovlje...); AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, p. 12, notice 18, p. 34, nt. 30, p. 22, p. 26, n. 1, pp. 149-150.

<sup>9</sup> *Arheološka najdišča Slovenije* 1975, p. 124: 9. Kojsko.

<sup>10</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> BERTACCHI 1993, pp. 194-204, 206-207.

<sup>12</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, p. 3.

Giovanni Cossar, who became the Director of the Museum after the war, had to prepare new inventories, in which he could only arrange the objects typologically. The inventories include short descriptions of the objects, and in many cases excellent aquarelle drawings, but no information about their provenience<sup>13</sup>.

In the Accademic year 1981-1982, Isabel Ahumada Silva prepared at the University of Trieste a diploma thesis dedicated to the iron objects, mostly weapons and tools, kept at the Provincial Museum in Gorizia<sup>14</sup>. She studied the above mentioned *Relazione alla Dieta Provinciale* and the preserved archival documents of the Provincial Museum thoroughly in order to extract any useful information that would assist in correlating the objects with the iron finds discovered on various archaeological sites ranging in date from the Early Iron Age to the Middle Ages. As the descriptions in the reports and in the manuscript lists of the Museum objects are mainly far too general, she had little success. Because of the lack of data she could not ascribe any of the iron tools in the Museum collections to the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard. On the contrary, she supposed that, because of its similarity with the examples found at Idrija pri Bači and Reka, the small ploughshare might have come from the necropolis of the Idrija pri Bači group discovered at Črniče (Cernizza) in the Vipava valley<sup>15</sup>, although in reality it belonged to the hoard.

Ahumada Silva unfortunately did not connect the short notice in the *Relazione* mentioning the discovery of the ancient agricultural tools at Vrhovlje pri Kojskem with another one, registered in the above mentioned *Arheološka najdišča Slovenije* under the heading of Plave<sup>16</sup>. It was published in 1893 in Vienna in the journal of the Central Commission<sup>17</sup> and says that, according to a report of Professor Maionica, in the vicinity of Plave (the village of Vrhovlje pri Kojskem lies above Plave, situated on the right bank of the Soča river) in 1891 some very beautiful iron objects were found, which were deposited in the Museum of Gorizia: two ploughshares, winged axes and a very interesting offering fork. Considering the fact that in the printed reports and archival documents in Gorizia nothing is said about another discovery near Plave in 1891 of ancient iron tools (two of which were ploughshares) having been deposited in the Provincial Museum, it is clear that both notices, the first published in Gorizia and the second in Vienna, describe the same discovery.

In 1983 Drago Svoljšak published in his report on the important site of Kovačevše in the Vipava valley the supplemented distribution map of the sites of the Idrija pri Bači group. Among them appears Vrhovlje pri Kojskem, which he had come across in the data included in Ahumada Silva's unpublished diploma thesis<sup>18</sup>. Like her, he failed to make the connection with the more precise notice published in Vienna.

In 1987, as part of the scientific exchange between the Slovene and Austrian Academies of Sciences and Arts, I had an opportunity to examine in the Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv (General Administrative Archives) in Vienna a part of the rich archives of the Central Commission, the so-called Funde Küstenland (Finds Littoral). In it I found several letters of Heinrich Maionica containing important data on the archaeological discoveries in the Soča region at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In a letter written at Gorizia on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1892, he first mentions the results of his excavation of an Early Imperial cemetery in the village of Kozaršče to the east of Most na Soči. He found eleven graves on the ground of the peasant Fon near the house of Andrej Velikonja (n. 25). A brief mention of the finds found near Čiginj and Kanal is followed by a rather exhaustive description of the hoard discovered "last year" (i.e. in 1891) near Plave (fig. 1). The hoard contained only five well-preserved iron objects: two ploughshares, a winged axe, an offering fork and a curved pointed hoe. I informed Ahumada Silva in Gorizia about the contents of this letter in November 1989. I also gave a transcript of it to Mitja Guštin, who published Maionica's data on the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard in his Posočje book<sup>19</sup>.

Drago Svoljšak published in 1999 an article on the archaeological landscape of the Goriška Brda hills. Like Guštin he ascribed two ploughshares, a winged axe and a fork to the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard, but, instead of one curved pointed hoe, no fewer than FOUR big iron hoes<sup>20</sup>! He did not cite any source in support for such a composition.

<sup>13</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 5-6, p. 14, n. 24, p. 34, nt. 35.

<sup>14</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982.

<sup>15</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 22, 101, n. 29.

<sup>16</sup> PETRU 1975, with an inaccurate translation of Maionica's description of the iron tools.

<sup>17</sup> «Mittheilungen der K.K. Central Commission», 19, 1893, pp. 73-74, n. 15: "Conservator Professor *Maionica* hat an die Central Commission berichtet, dass... und im vorigen Jahre fand man in der Nähe von *Plava* am Abhänge der neuen Straße sehr schöne Eisengegenstände, die dann an das Görzer Museum kamen; dermalen zwei Pflugscharen, eiserne Palstäbe und eine eiserne sehr interessante Opfergabel". In the preceding year ("im vorigen Jahre") means in 1891, while the report of Maionica, which served as a source for this notice, had been written in December 1892.

<sup>18</sup> SVOLJŠAK 1983, p. 16, n. 13, fig. 5/13.

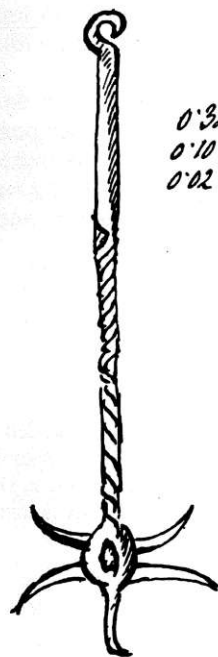
<sup>19</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, p. 28: Vrhovlje pri Kojskem (with several errors in the transcription of Maionica's letter: Schloßmeister, gültige, Vermittelung); p. 61, nt. 202.

<sup>20</sup> SVOLJŠAK 1999, p. 23, n. 5, nt. 11; p. 28.

In südlicher Richtung an der Straße nach Görz sind öfters bei „Canale“ Münzen und Antikagläser gefunden worden, und voriges Jahr sind auch in der Nähe von Plava am Abhang der neuen Straße, welche von St. Martin bei Quince über Vrhovlje nach Plava führt und damit bei Loggitz mit dem Taurathale verbindet, sehr schöne Gegenstände gefunden worden. Dieselben wurden dem Schlossermeister nach St. Martin überbracht, und durch gütige Vermittelung des Herrn Dr. Josef Valopai, Advokaten in Görz für das Landesmuseum in Görz gewonnen. —

Diese Gegenstände bestehen aus:—

- 1) Phlegel aus Eisen 0.12 h., 0.20 br., mit einer 0.10 breiten Öffnung.
- 2) „ „ „ 0.16 h., 0.10 br. —
- 3) Palstab aus Eisen, 0.19 h., 0.02 br.,
- 4) Sehr interessante Opfergabel aus Eisen (πεμπύβος), gleicher Art, welche bei St. Francesco bei Bologna gefunden worden sind.

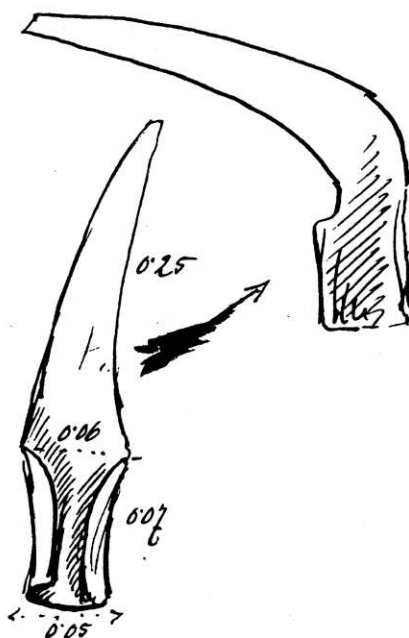


0.32 h.  
0.10 br.  
0.02 d. —

5) Exornier Palstab, dolchartig ausgehend, wie ähnliche Stücke im Kärntnerlande häufig gefunden und

zwar:

- a) St. Lucia
- b) Rubbia
- c) Medea
- d) Fogliano



0.25

0.06

0.07

0.05

Fig. 1. The parts of the letter of Heinrich Maionica to the Central Commission in Vienna from 8<sup>th</sup> December 1892 that concern the Vrhovlje pri Kojsem hoard of iron tools.

In the same year I published Maionica's drawing of the fork in the book *Zakladi tisočletij – Treasures of the Millennia*, a popular history of Slovenia from Neanderthal man to the Slavs<sup>21</sup>. The drawing was accompanied by this text: "In 1891 several iron tools dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., i.e. two ploughshares, a winged axe, a pointed hoe and a meat fork, were found at Vrhovlje pri Kojskem in the vicinity of the new road built between Šmartno on the Brda hills and Plave. The finds were acquired by the Provincial Museum at Gorizia, where most of them are still preserved. The meat fork..."

Totally neglecting all that was published on the contents of the hoard by both Guštin in 1991 and myself in 1999, in 2000 Ugo Furlani ascribed to the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard no fewer than 16 tools: ploughshares, axes, sickles and knives<sup>22</sup>. He too cited no published or unpublished source to confirm this statement.

The final chapter of this prolonged story of attempting to establish the objects that really belong to the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard is the catalogue of the exhibition *Gli echi della terra*, held in 2002 at the Castle of Gorizia. Ahumada Silva potentially (the title of her catalogue section is Vrhovlje / Vercoglie?) ascribed three tools to the hoard, already identified by me in the letter I sent her in November 1989<sup>23</sup>. The photo of the curved hoe (cat., n. 3) was by mistake published with another object (p. 67, cat., n. 1). The bibliography cited by Ahumada Silva contains only an article of Gaetano Forni<sup>24</sup> [where he publishes the ploughshare under the site Črniče (Cernizza) and not Vrhovlje, following the wrong supposition of Ahumada Silva in 1981-1982] and her unpublished diploma thesis. The publications of Furlani, Guštin, Svoljšak and myself remained unmentioned.

Let us now turn back to the main source, the letter of Heinrich Maionica of 8<sup>th</sup> December 1892 (fig. 1)<sup>25</sup>. Maionica informed the Central Commission that the well preserved iron objects were found in 1891 on the slope of the new road leading from Šmartno over Vrhovlje towards Plave. From two documents mentioned by Ahumada Silva we know that they were found at Vrhovlje pri Kojskem<sup>26</sup>, but the exact find spot remains unknown. Maionica gave the dimensions of all five objects and even made drawings of two of them, the fork and the curved pointed hoe. Three finds can easily be recognized among the unprovenanced tools in the collection of the Provincial Museum of Gorizia (fig. 2, 1; 3, 5). Their dimensions, given by Maionica in 1892 (the ploughshare is 20 cm long and 12 cm wide, the upper part with wings 10 cm wide; the winged axe is 19 cm long and 7 cm wide; the curved hoe has a 7 cm long shaft and a 25 cm long blade, lacking its point, and is 5 cm wide at the upper end and 6 cm at the point where the shaft meets the blade), correspond quite well with the dimensions given by Ahumada Silva in 2002 (the ploughshare is 19,5 cm long with 12,3 max. width; the winged axe is 19,3 cm long with 7,9 cm max. width; the curved hoe is 34,2 cm long with a max. width of 6 cm).

The smaller ploughshare, which according to Maionica was only 16 cm long and 10 cm wide, cannot be identified among the tools of the Gorizia Museum. If these dimensions are correct, it has been lost. The other possibility is that Maionica made a mistake and that the dimension 10 cm does not mean the width, but the approximate length of the blade. In his letter he first erroneously gave 12 cm as the length of the larger ploughshare and 20 cm as its width, but he then corrected himself. He made another mistake by citing some places in the Soča valley and in the

<sup>21</sup> BOŽIČ 1999c, p. 180.

<sup>22</sup> FURLANI 2000, p. 36, fig. 14.

<sup>23</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 2002, p. 67 and p. 83: Vrhovlje?

<sup>24</sup> FORNI 1989, p. 330, n. 8.

<sup>25</sup> MAIONICA 1892: "In südlicher Richtung an der Straße nach Görz sind öfters bei "Canale" Münzen und Antikaglien gefunden worden, und voriges Jahr sind auch in der Nähe von Plava am Abhange der neuen Strasse, welche von St. Martin bei Quisca über Vrkovlje (sic!) nach Plava führt, und damit die Cogliogegend mit dem Isonzothale verbindet, sehr schöne Eisengegenstände gefunden worden. Dieselben wurden dem Schlossermeister nach St. Martin überbracht und durch gütige Vermittelung des Herrn Dr. Josef Jakopič, Advokaten in Görz für das Landesmuseum in Görz gewonnen. —

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<sup>26</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, p. 12, nn. 17-18; p. 26, n. 1. In Maionica's list of 1901 the objects are even registered under Šmartno (S. Martino di Quisca) instead under Vrhovlje pri Kojskem (Vercoglie). The iron tools found at Vrhovlje pri Kojskem were namely first brought to the locksmith master (Schlossermeister) in nearby Šmartno and came from there to the Provincial Museum in Gorizia. Cfr. AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, p. 20; p. 26, n. 2. She did not realize that in the list of 1901 Šmartno was just a substitute for Vrhovlje.



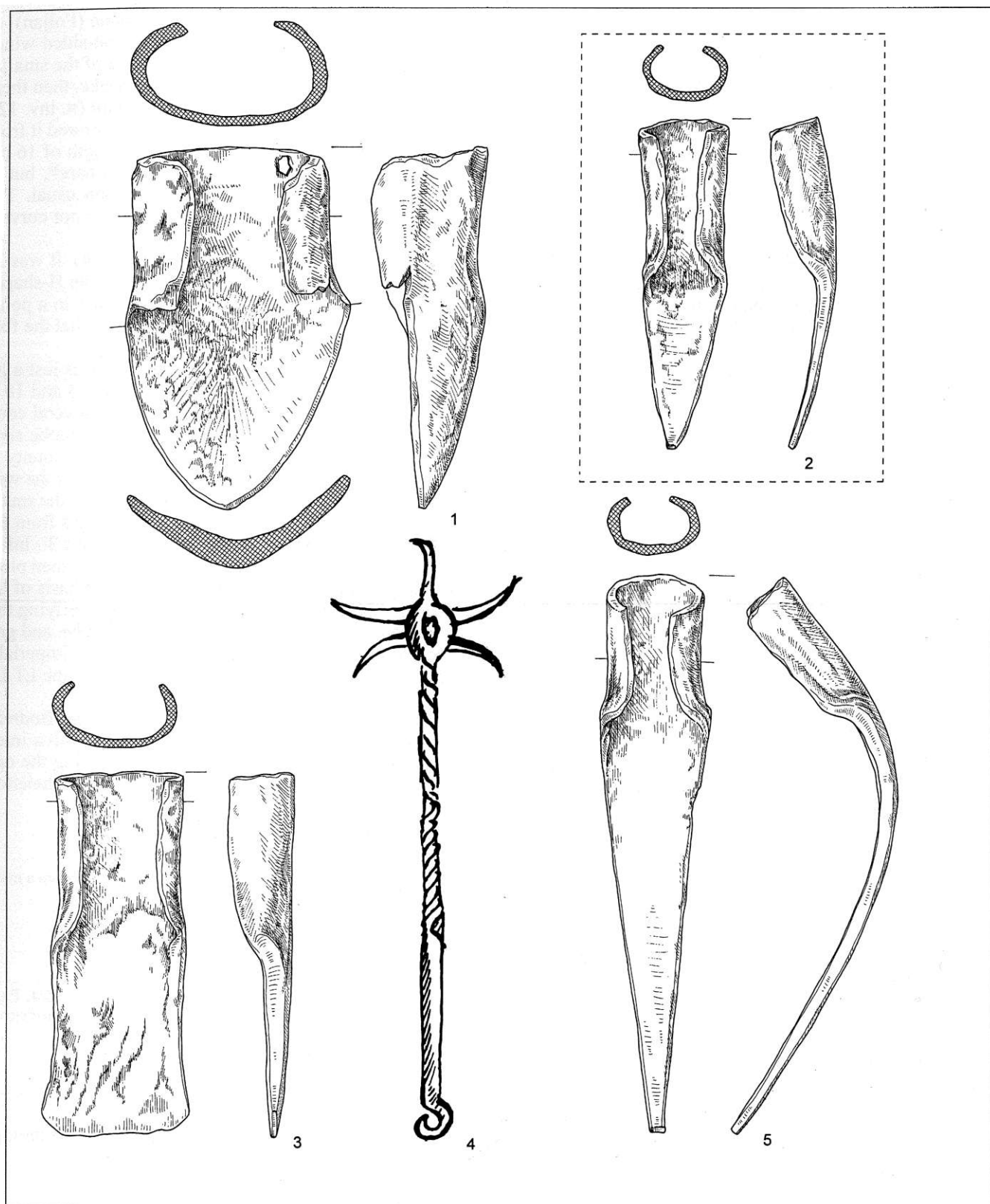


Fig. 2. Hoard of iron tools from Vrhovlje pri Kojskem above the Soča valley. The smaller hoe n. 2 very probably belonged to the hoard (n. 4: drawing in Maionica's letter of 8<sup>th</sup> December 1892) (scale 1:3).

Gorizia region [Santa Lucia di Tolmino (Most na Soči), Rubbia (Rubije), Medea (Medeja) and Fogliano (Foljan)] as find spots of the curved hoes like n. 5 from the Vrhovlje pri Kojsem hoard. In reality, axes with one-sided wings similar to the axe n. 3 have been discovered at the sites he names. Had Maionica measured the length of the smaller ploughshare from the beginning of the wings to the point, and if the 10 cm given as the width is a mistake, then there is an iron object in the Gorizia Museum that might be object n. 2 from the Vrhovlje pri Kojsem hoard (n. inv. 12 - fig. 2, 2). Its length is not 18,9 cm, as Ahumada Silva wrote, but according to Giovanni Cossar, who measured it from the point to the beginning of the wings, it is only 16,6 cm long<sup>27</sup>. In this way we arrive close to the length of 16 cm reported by Maionica. The object was interpreted by Ahumada Silva, Forni and Guštin as a ploughshare<sup>28</sup>, but in my opinion it is just a small example of a curved pointed hoe with a less strongly bent blade than usual. The possible ploughshares, like the two originating from Smihel pod Nanosom, have a long blade, which is not curved, but straight<sup>29</sup>.

As already said above, the well preserved elaborate fork was drawn in Maionica's letter (figg. 1; 2, 4). It was 32 cm long and 10 cm wide and its handle was made of a 1 cm thick iron rod. It consisted of two elements: an H-shaped part with four prongs which was riveted to the flattened round upper part of the handle, which terminates in a point. The major part of the handle was twisted in two directions, part to the left and part to the right. It seems that the fork was lost during the First World War as it does not appear in the inventories of Giovanni Cossar.

The ploughshare from the hoard (fig. 2, 1) is 19,5 cm long and 12,3 cm wide; its weight is 1,54 kg. It is just a little smaller than four similar shovel-shaped ploughshares discovered in the Soča region: two from graves 5 and 18 at Idrija pri Bači, one from grave 3 at Reka and one which is an isolated grave find from Reka (fig. 3)<sup>30</sup>. Several comparable ploughshares are also known from the regions extending to the north and to the south of the Danube river (fig. 4). With one exception (the example found in the La Tène settlement at Vadaskert near Hahót, Zala county in Hungary<sup>31</sup>) they all come from iron tool hoards<sup>32</sup>. They show greater variability as far as the dimensions and the weight are concerned. We can establish some characteristics for the group of shovel-shaped ploughshares from the south-eastern Alpine region and from the regions along the Danube. They are relatively narrow [the width ranges from 8,7 cm (Háhot) to 15 cm (Bratislava)] and light [the weight ranges from 0,53 kg (Háhot) to 2,06 kg (Reka, grave 3 - information kindly provided by Angelika Heinrich, Vienna)], especially when we compare them with the Late Roman ploughshares that are relatively numerous in Slovenia<sup>33</sup>. The small ploughshare from Háhot was dated on the basis of the pottery sherds to the LT C2 period<sup>34</sup>. The fact that the sherds have not been published prevents us from verifying this dating. However, it is certain that the hoards that contained ploughshares from the regions along the Danube, and graves 5 and 18 from Idrija pri Bači, belong to the LT D period. The latest finds in grave 3 from Reka are Early Imperial<sup>35</sup>, but the grave also contains several earlier objects, among them a round shield boss of the form typical for the LT D1 period<sup>36</sup>.

The curved pointed hoes (fig. 2, 5) are a local form, known exclusively from sites located in the Soča (Bodrež), Tolminka (Žabče) and Idrija (Most na Soči, Idrija pri Bači) valleys<sup>37</sup>. In her diploma thesis<sup>38</sup> Ahumada Silva interpreted this type of hoe as a ploughshare with dagger-shaped blade ("vomere a lama di pugnale"), following the opinion of Iván Balassa<sup>39</sup>. Such a hoe from grave 9 at Idrija pri Bači<sup>40</sup> was earlier declared a ploughshare by Déchelette<sup>41</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> Inventario, n. 83: Ordigni rurali e di altri mestieri di epoca romana antica fino al secolo XVIII; n. 12: strumento di ferro ricurvo a manico di legno per scavare nella terra.

<sup>28</sup> Cat., n. 2, at the end of the article.

<sup>29</sup> JACOBI 1974, p. 67, nt. 287; HORVAT 2002, p. 169, pl. 18/2, 3.

<sup>30</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, p. 60, Pflugschare und Seche, pl. 6/1; 19/3; 31/1; 35/10.

<sup>31</sup> MÜLLER 1997, p. 92, fig. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Kúty - Čepangát (KRASKOVSKÁ 1948, p. 162, n. 4, fig. 31); Bratislava - Gottwaldovo námestie (PAULÍK 1970, p. 48, fig. 15/4; PIETA 2000, p. 142, fig. 10/1); Plavecké Podhradie - Pohanská (PAULÍK, TOMČIKOVÁ 2005, p. 89, n. 14, pl. 2/5); Kolín (RYBOVÁ, MOTYKOVÁ 1983, p. 102, fig. 13/4); Attersee - Kaiserbrunn (MOOSLEITNER 1998-1999, p. 506, n. 7, fig. 7/7).

<sup>33</sup> BOŽIČ 2005, p. 345.

<sup>34</sup> MÜLLER 1997, p. 92.

<sup>35</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, pl. 29/13-15.

<sup>36</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, pl. 30/4; BOŽIČ 1999a, p. 198: type Beletov vrt 169.

<sup>37</sup> SZOMBATHY 1901, p. 359: Spitzhauen mit einseitigen Schaftlappen; JACOBI 1974, p. 73, fig. 22/3: Tüllenspitzhacken; GUŠTIN 1991, pp. 61-62: Spitzhacken; SVOLJŠAK 1967b, p. 86, pl. 2/13; MLINAR 2002a, p. 52, cat., n. 31, p. 27, fig. 19.

<sup>38</sup> AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 106-110, nn. 32-35.

<sup>39</sup> BALASSA 1975, p. 244, fig. 2/7.

<sup>40</sup> SZOMBATHY 1901, p. 319, fig. 103.

<sup>41</sup> DÉCHELETTE 1927, p. 884, fig. 610/6.

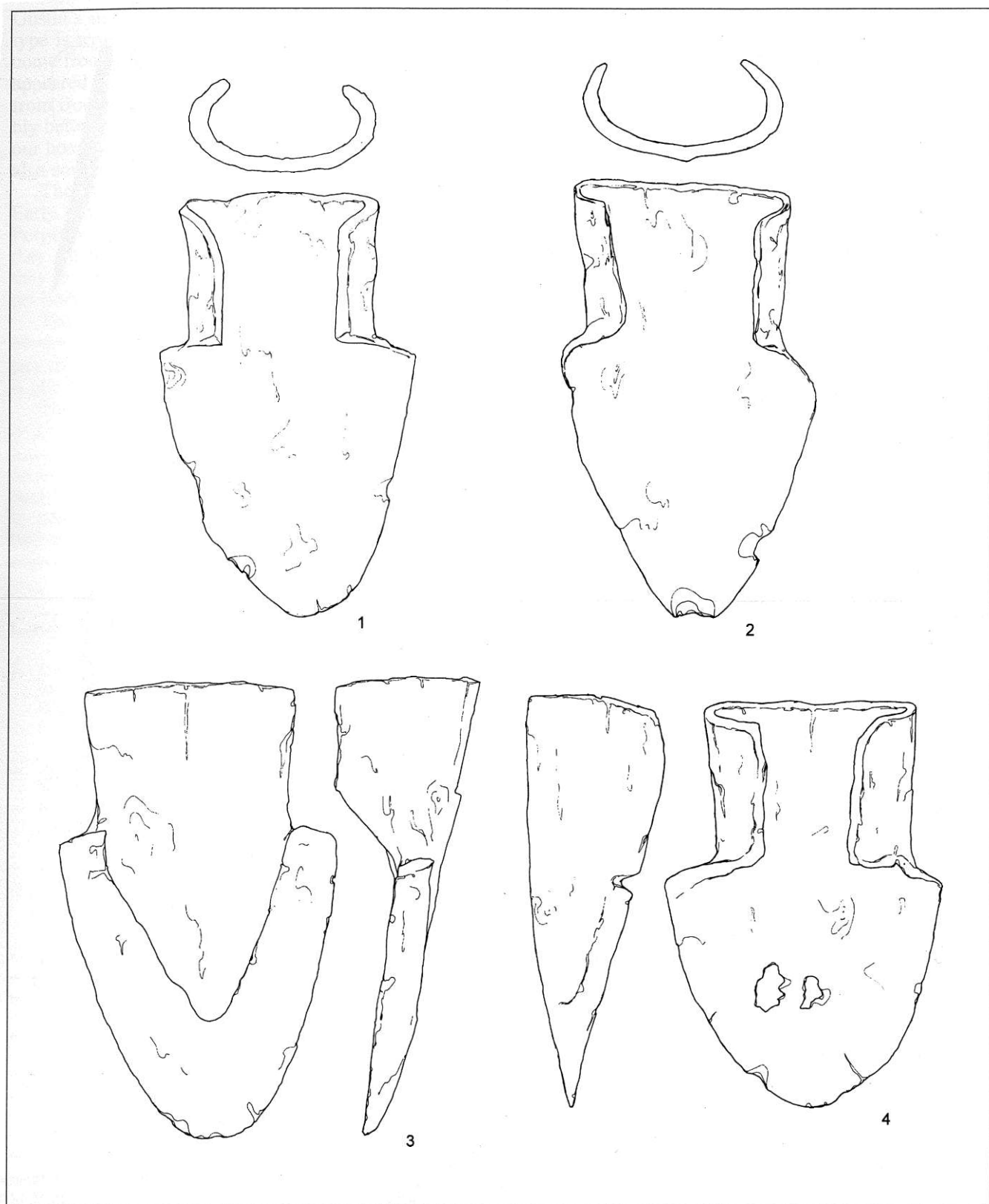


Fig. 3. Late La Tène iron ploughshares from the Soča region. 1: Idrija pri Bači, grave 5; 2: Idrija pri Bači, grave 18; 3: Reka, grave 3; 4: Reka, isolated grave find (scale 1:3).

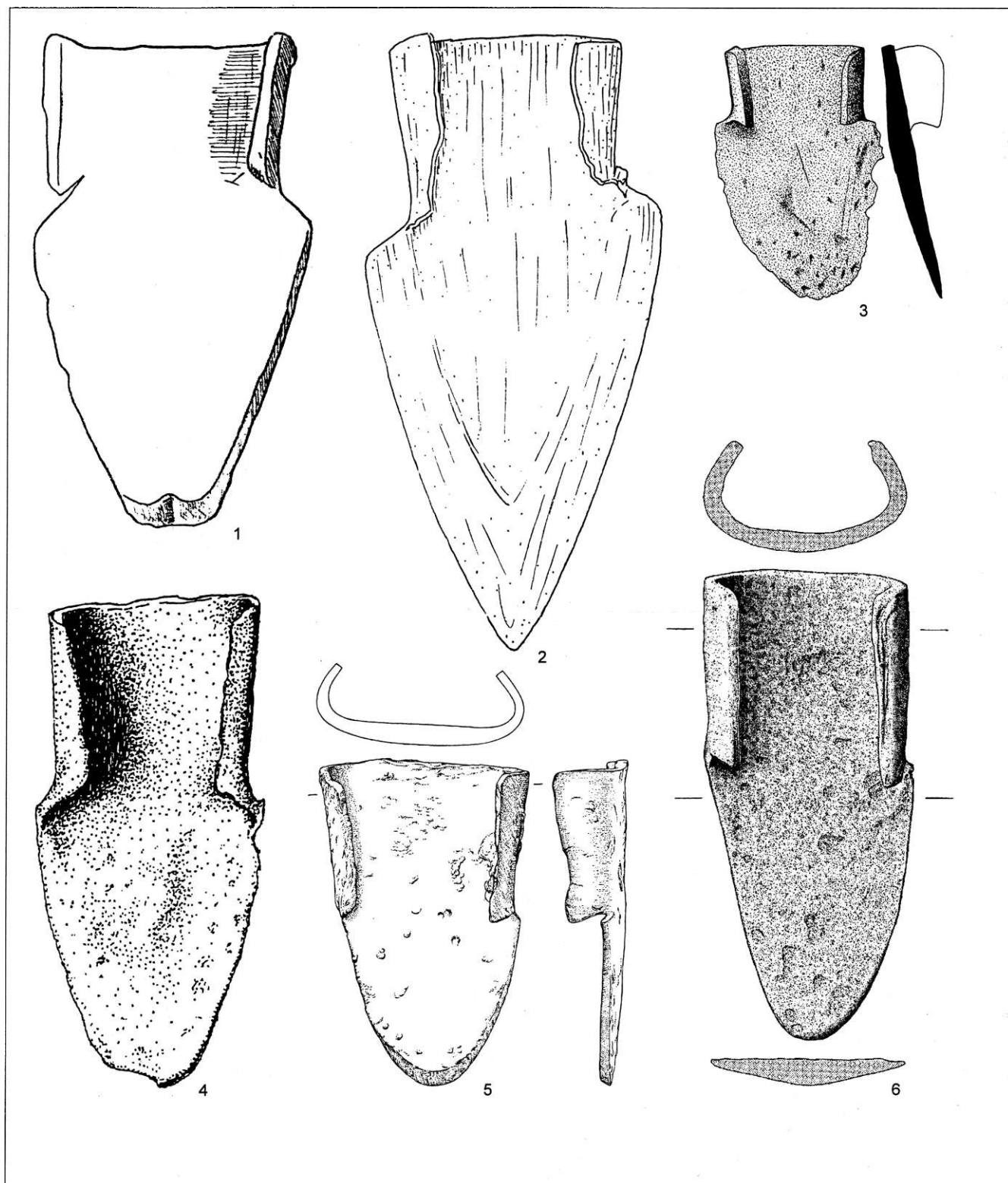


Fig. 4. LT C2 ? (n. 3) and Late La Tène (nn. 1-2 and 4-6) iron ploughshares from the regions along the Danube. 1: Kúty - Čepangát, Slovakia, hoard (after KRASKOVSKÁ 1948); 2: Bratislava - Gottwaldovo námestie, Slovakia, hoard (after PAULÍK 1970); 3: Hahót - Vadaskert, Hungary, settlement (after MÜLLER 1997); 4: Plavecké Podhradie - Pohanská, Slovakia, hoard IV/89 (after PAULÍK, TOMČÍKOVÁ 2005); 5: Kolín, Czech Republic, hoard (after RYBOVÁ, MOTYKOVÁ 1983); 6: Attersee - Kaiserbrunn, Austria, hoard (after MOOSLEITNER 1998-1999) (scale 1:3).



Guštin's statement that two hoes from Šmihel pod Nanosom in the Notranjska region also belong to the Soča region type is wrong<sup>42</sup>, as they have a straight rather than curved blade<sup>43</sup>. The curved pointed hoes of the Soča region type come from graves and the Modrej hoard, which are all datable to the LT D period. Guštin has already stated that they appeared in two variants, large examples and small ones<sup>44</sup>. The latter are especially well represented among the tools from Bodrež. One of the small hoes from Bodrež<sup>45</sup> is, in both form and dimensions, very close to the hoe that probably belongs to the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard (fig. 2, 2). If my explanation of this object as a hoe is correct, then in our hoard there is one ploughshare and two pointed hoes, one large and one small. The iron tool hoard from Modrej also contained two curved hoes<sup>46</sup>.

The one-sided winged axes (fig. 2, 3) represent a type with a very long date range. They appear as early as the Early Iron Age<sup>47</sup>. Not far from the Soča region they are, for example, attested in the weapons and harness hoard of Porpetto in Friuli, which is dated to the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.<sup>48</sup>. In the burial mounds of Dolenjske Toplice they are characteristic deposits of the latest graves, which date to the end of the Early Iron Age<sup>49</sup>. On the other hand, they are also relatively frequent in the LT D and later graves of the Idrija pri Bači group, for example in the sites Idrija pri Bači, Reka and Bodrež<sup>50</sup>.

The five pronged fork (fig. 2, 4), made of two riveted elements, has its best parallels in the iron tool hoard of Modrej near Most na Soči, recently dated to LT D, and in the Augustan grave 17 from Idrija pri Bači<sup>51</sup>. The fragmentary fork from Modrej with a socketed handle probably had six rather than five prongs<sup>52</sup>. The fork from Idrija pri Bači is poorly preserved<sup>53</sup>, but it has a twisted handle like the lost fork from Vrhovlje pri Kojskem.

The hoard of Vrhovlje pri Kojskem found in 1891 and reconstructed here (fig. 2) is one of two Late La Tène (= LT D) hoards with iron tools known so far from Slovenia, both discovered in the Soča region. The second one was found after the Second World War in a gravel-pit on the slope V griču near Modrej village to the north-east of Most na Soči<sup>54</sup>. The objects lay at a depth of around 4 m. The dating of the Vrhovlje pri Kojskem hoard is on the one hand based on the dating of the hoards with shovel-shaped ploughshares in the regions along the Danube and on the other by comparison with the inventory of grave 5 of Idrija pri Bači, which contains four similar objects<sup>55</sup> (a ploughshare, two winged axes and a curved pointed hoe), and on its comparison with the Modrej hoard with three analogous objects<sup>56</sup> (two curved pointed hoes and a fork).

### Catalogue

1. Iron ploughshare. Length 19,5 cm, width 12,3 cm, weight 1,54 kg (fig. 2, 1).  
Museo Provinciale di Gorizia, n. inv. 3.  
Bibl.: AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 101-103, n. 29 (origin: Cernizza = Črniče ?), pl. 11 and 40; FORNI 1989, p. 330, n. 8 (origin: Cernizza = Črniče); AHUMADA SILVA 2002, p. 83, n. 1 (origin: Vrhovlje = Vercoglie ?), fig. I.84.
2. Iron curved pointed hoe. Length 17,8 cm, width 5 cm, weight 0,32 kg (fig. 2, 2).  
Museo Provinciale di Gorizia, n. inv. 12.  
Bibl.: AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 109-110, n. 35, pl. 13 and 43 ("vomere"); FORNI 1989, pp. 330-331, n. 11, fig. 4: 11 ("vomere a ferro di pugnale"); GUŠTIN 1991, p. 12, Črniče, e, p. 60 ("Pflugeisen"); AHUMADA SILVA 2002, p. 67, n. 1 ("vomere a lama di pugnale"; origin: near Gorizia).

<sup>42</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, p. 62, nt. 208.

<sup>43</sup> HORVAT 2002, p. 169, pl. 18/2-3.

<sup>44</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, p. 61: Hacken.

<sup>45</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, pl. 38/10.

<sup>46</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, pp. 23-24, pl. 45/1, 2.

<sup>47</sup> SEDLMAYER 2000, p. 179.

<sup>48</sup> VITRI 1990, c. 394.

<sup>49</sup> TERŽAN 1976, pp. 439, 440, 443.

<sup>50</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, p. 61: Hacken.

<sup>51</sup> MLINAR 2002b; GUŠTIN 1991, p. 66: Fleischgabeln.

<sup>52</sup> SVOLJŠAK 1967a, p. 86, n. 9, pl. 3/12; GUŠTIN 1991, pl. 45/4.

<sup>53</sup> SZOMBATHY 1901, p. 340, o, fig. 191.

<sup>54</sup> SVOLJŠAK 1967a, p. 85, pl. 3/6-13; MLINAR 2002b, p. 82, fig. I.81.

<sup>55</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, pl. 5/4, 5, 8; 6/1.

<sup>56</sup> GUŠTIN 1991, pl. 45/1, 2, 4.

3. Iron one-sided winged axe. Length 19,3 cm, width 7,9 cm, weight 0,85 kg (fig. 2, 3).  
Museo Provinciale di Gorizia, n. inv. 18.  
Bibl.: AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 41, 71-72, n. 8, pl. 3 and 29; AHUMADA SILVA 2002, p. 83, n. 2 (origin: Vrhovlje = Vercoglie ?).
4. Iron fork. Length 32 cm, width 10 cm, thickness of the handle 1 cm (fig. 2, 4).  
Bibl.: Božič 1999c, p. 180, with fig.
5. Iron curved pointed hoe. Length 29,7 cm, width 6 cm, weight 0,73 kg (fig. 2, 5).  
Museo Provinciale di Gorizia, n. inv. 9.  
Bibl.: AHUMADA SILVA 1981-1982, pp. 106-107, n. 32, pl. 12 and 43 ("vomere a lama di pugnale"); AHUMADA SILVA 2002, p. 83, n. 3 ("zappa", origin: Vrhovlje = Vercoglie ?), p. 67, fig. I.59.

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#### POVZETEK

*Rekonstrukcija in analiza poznolatenske zakladne najdbe orodja z Vrhovlja pri Kojskem nad dolino Soče*

Leta 1891 je bila pri Vrhovlju pri Kojskem na pobočju nove ceste Šmartno - Plave odkrita zakladna najdba železnega orodja, ki jo je pridobil Deželni muzej v Gorici. Iz pisma, ki ga je direktor muzeja Heinrich Maionica 8. 12. 1892 poslal Centralni komisiji na Dunaju, izhaja, da je vsebovala pet predmetov: lopatast lemež, veliko in majhno ukrivljeno koničasto kopačo, sekuro z enostranskimi plavutmi in vilice za meso. Zakladna najdba sodi tako kot njej podobna najdba iz Modreja v pozni laten.

#### RIASSUNTO

*La ricostruzione e l'analisi del ripostiglio tardolateniano di arnesi in ferro di Vrhovlje pri Kojskem nella valle dell'Isonzo*

Nel corso del 1891 è stato scoperto a Vrhovlje pri Kojskem sul versante della nuova strada Šmartno - Plave un ripostiglio di arnesi in ferro, acquistato dal Museo Provinciale di Gorizia. Il suo contenuto è stato ricostruito in base alla lettera spedita, l'8 dicembre del 1892, da Heinrich Maionica, Direttore del Museo, alla Commissione Centrale a Vienna. Si tratta di un vomere a lama di vanga, una zappa grande e una piccola a lama ricurva ed appuntita, un'ascia ad alette monolaterali e un graffione. Il ripostiglio può essere datato al tardo La Tène analogamente al simile ripostiglio di Modrej.

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