

CACAK REGION
FROM PREHISTORY TO THE
END OF THE MIDDLE AGES





The story about the past of Cacak begins much earlier than the first mentioning of its name in the 15th century. The oldest inhabitants were attracted by river valleys of the West Morava and its tributaries and hilly area of Cacak region, and they built their houses –dugouts and houses made of poles coated with mud, as early as in Neolith (5500 to 3200 B.C.)



Pre historic period in the permanent exhibition, 2006

On the locality 'Crkvina' in Miokovci, an altar and dishes from pre barbotin phase of proto Starcevo have been found. Hand made ceramics for house usage of classic Starcevo culture and some objects have been found in settlements 'Trsine' and 'Slatina' in the valley of the river Cemernica. The inhabitants, apart from hunting and fishing, were dealing with half nomadic farming, rising tamed animals, weaving and making pottery with bone tools. Are exhibited Axes made of ground stone, bone tools made of stag's antlers, needles, pointed tools, little knives made of flint and obsidian and weights for fishing nets are.



Dish, Ostra, Bakovaca, Older Neolith



Altar, Bresnica, Aniste, Older Neolith



Stranier, Ridjage, Vinogradi, Younger Neolith

◀ Golden jewelry, Atenica, end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th century B.C.



*Figurine, Ridjage, Vinogradi,
Younger Neolith, Vinca culture*



*Figurine, Guca, Younger
Neolith, Vinca culture*



*Dish, Gornja Gorevnica, Early
Bronze Age*

Under the protection of over lived culture of Starcevo a new, Vinca culture appeared and findings were in settlements in upper, naturally protected places, beside river flows: 'Poljicine' (Ostra), 'Trsine' (Gornja Gorevnica), 'Vinogradi' (Ridjage), 'Breg' (Guca) and 'Velikelivade' (Krstac). On the sunny slope above the river Cemernica in Gornja Gorevnica, a house of big dimensions whose roof was supported by wooden columns was researched.

The transition into younger Neolith about 4500



Bowel, Ostra, Middle Bronze Age

B.C. is represented by ceramics of Vinca structure, with a surface processing in Vinca manner, from Ostra. Various ceramic materials come from other localities and they date back from younger phase of Vinca culture (Vinca-Plocnik), above all dark, grey-black pottery with ornaments engraved and stylized, black anthropomorphic plastics. Bi conical bowels made of well filtered ground belong to shinny polished ceramics. Miniature vessels, animal figurines and axes had cult purpose.

Vinca culture disappeared in the region of Sumadija and West Serbia between 3500 and 3200 B.C. before the invasion of easily movable collectives of cattle breeders at the time when both natives and newcomers mastered the metallurgy of copper. Ceramics of different cultural groups of Eneolith were noticed in disarranged pre historic layers of Gradina settlement on Sokolica in Ostra.

Bronze Age which lasted throughout the whole 2nd millennium B.C. started with migration of Indo Europeans from the steppe of the south region



Bracelets, Guca, Grotnica, Middle Bronze Age

of Russia. They brought with them metal suitable for manufacturing weapons and jewelry, and new religious beliefs. Apart from settlement material from early and middle Bronze Age in Sokolica in Gradina, other settlements in Cacak region have not been found.

Necropolis under the tombs on the slopes and in hilly mountain ranges in Dragacevo reveals their presence in this meadow rich area. In the tombs from Early Bronze Age there are no metal findings, while ceramic material such as jugs and cups are connected in their forms with local culture Belotic – Bela Crkva. Graves from developed



Cup, Ducalovici, Ruja, Early Bronze Age



Glasses like pendant, Jancici, Dubac, Middle Bronze Age



Urn, Jancici, Middle Bronze Age

HELMET APPLICATION

Partly preserved, presents a wild boar, expressively presented strength, vertically positioned bristles, and made of silver coated sheet metal, by technique of beating. It could have been placed either on a helmet or a shield. It belongs to developed creations of



Attic or Corinth style of the second half of the 6th century B.C.



*Fibula,
Vidova, Older Iron Age*

Bronze Age in Lucani, Jancici, Krstac, Guca, Ducalovici and Donja Kravarica contain various jewelries: necklaces, bracelets, glasses or pipe like pendants, tutulas, saltaleons, needles and pincers, whose property was showing the social status of their owners. Urns' shapes and ornaments are connected with Vatina culture which appeared about 1600 B.C. Bronze Age ended by standing out first groups of pre Illyrians and pre Thracians and beginnings of ethnic forming old Balkanize tribes. Great migrations of peoples at the end of the 13th



Bracelets, Gornji Branetici, Older Iron Age

and beginning of the 12th century B.C. included cultures of the Bronze Age on the territory of Serbia and caused transition into Hallstatt.

Older Iron Age (12th - 8th century B.C.) started after turbulences and migrations by the end of Bronze Age. Introducing of new technology of production and processing of iron did not interrupt continuation of population settling from late-Bronze Age, whose presence was noticed on the roads leading to Cacak. It is presented by bronze jewelry from Vidova, kelt from Mojsinje, bronze bracelets' storage from Gornji Branetici and a settlement ceramics from the locality Velika basca (Big garden) in Vujetinci.

During several centuries, at the beginning of the last millennium B.C. ethnic populations clearly divided and formed thus marking historical period on the wider region of the territory of Serbia. They were also recorded in historical sources starting from the Greek historian Herodotus who mentions tribal valley by the river Velika Morava.

Two big tombs in Atenica rich in findings of golden and silver jewelry from the graves of duke, young prince and a princess were made in the period of intensive dividing of tribal society at the end of the 6th century B.C. However it is still hypothetical because of similar level of development of ethnic



Bracelets of glass paste, Atenica, end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th century B. C.

groups and their intercultural intervening at the beginning of Hallstatt. Duke's necropolis belong to the period of time of rise of tribal aristocracy in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. and exceptionally rich material culture whose autohton creations were harmoniously elaborated with imported material from the Apennine Peninsula, Greece, Black Sea Coast and Russian steppes. In the duke's grave weapons of a tribal warrior were found: swords, spears, arrows and shields. The wheel of a cart which carried it to the stake was reconstructed. Grave findings in both tombs consist of golden, silver, amber and glass jewelry, metal dishes, ojnohoe, boxes with bone covers and horse equipment. Imported objects from Greece



Golden necklace, Atenica, end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th century B.C.

OJNOHOE

A yellow-reddish dish with a beaky opening, exposed stomach and a ring leg. The handle is grooved. There are three stripes of dark



red color on the shoulder and stomach. It belongs to Ionic ceramics from Black Sea Coast from the 6th century B.C.

and their craftsmen workshops in Ionic colonies on the Black Sea Coast came to the tribal territory by the trade roads along the bank of the Danube. At the end of the 6th and first decades of the 5th century B.C. direct connections with Skits were established who enabled getting three-part arrows and two-part iron balls in Atenica. Apart from luxurious material in dukes' graves, not well burnt conic bowels were found, the only trace of everyday life of ordinary cattle breeding population whose settlements have not been discovered. After defeat in the war with Alexander the Great in 335 B.C., tribal organization weakened and disappeared in the 1st century B.C.

Roman conquest on the Balkan Peninsula in the 1st century A.D. established administrative rule which contributed Romanization of local population. Cacak region was a part of Dalmatian Province. On its east border in the vicinity of Cacak in 197 there was VIII voluntary cohort. At the place of the town there was a village settlement, vicus, with beneficiary station for tax collecting.

Cacak was on the crossroads, where beneficiary stations were usually built, fortified with ramparts and ditches. Beneficiaries from Claudio's XI legion were guarding roads, following important transports, while consular beneficiaries were supervising tax collecting. It is assumed that II Dalmatian cohort 'Aurelia' was in the regions around Cacak in 176 under the command of tribune Tiberius Claudio Gal because of defending of eastern border from bandits. Money – denars and antonians were found in Goracici as they were in circulation in this region in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.



Capitol, surroundings of Cacak, 5th century

In the first half of the 3rd century in Cacak and its vicinity II Dalmatian cohort was located. Commander of this cavalry military troop, with an honorary title 'Emilio', tribune Cnaeus Pompeius Polittianus built altars devoted to military Mars, Serapes and Aside, which were discovered in Cacak. During the rule of the emperor Emilio in 253, Quintus Sextilius Marinus, commander of II Dalmatian cavalry cohort, placed a monument to God of Jupiter. The cohort left its seal on the bricks found in Cacak. It is assumed that its camp was by the river Jezdina. The mention of this cavalry cohort on the altar devoted to Goddess Diana, from Gradina in Jelica, points at the exploitation of metal ore in the vicinity of Cacak, for whose transport strong military security was needed. It is very likely that Cacak, at the end of the 2nd and in the 3rd century, was an important military center on the crossroads on the eastern border of Dalmatian Province and close to important mines.



Stone lion, Prijevor, Culjevina, 5th century



Glass bottle, Prijevor, Culjevina, 5th century



Altar devoted to Jupiter, Jezdina, 197



*Merkur,
Bresnica, 2nd - 3rd century*



*Storage room of Roman money
from Goracici, 2nd and 3rd century*

Fertile valley of the West Morava was divided in the second half of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century into numerous farming estates. Their owners did not give up comfortable life, that is why thermal baths were discovered in Cacak and in Beljina, and they were built in the style of well organized rustic villas. Dimensions of thermal baths in Beljina point out that they had private purpose. They consisted of rooms for cold and hot bathing, sweating, exercises and body adapting between bathing in cold and hot water. Some of the rooms were painted. A part of the estate in Prijevor was a corn store room, while in Gornja Gorevnica there were several economy objects. Not far from them there were memories built to the cult of dead. On the locality of Culjevina, glass dishes, jewelry and medical accessories were discovered as grave donations.

In the attacks of Germanic tribes on the Roman provinces on the Balkan at the end of eighties of the 4th century, a villa in Gornja Gorevnica was burnt down. After the defeat of the emperor Valence in the battle with Goths at Hadrian field, from 378 to 383 they were vandalizing on the whole territory of Serbia. These events did not interrupt the continuity of life in the valley of the Zapadna Morava River during the following decades. Life on numerous farms was interrupted during the Huns' invasion on the Balkans in 441-443. The inhabitants left the farms due to economic hardships in the empire during migration of peoples. Classical world was trying to protect itself from the barbaric invasion from the north in the 4th and 5th centuries by building systems of fortifications.

Building of new cities and reconstruction of the old ones was continued in the early Byzantium period when fortifications (gradine) were built in the mountainous region of Dragacevo – on Jelica and in the Lisa village during the rule of emperor Justinian I (527-565).

‘Gradina’ on Jelica with its most important findings from the 6th century was probably administrative and Bishopric centre. In the museum there are fragments of frescoes preserved in the lower parts of the walls and baptistery from basilica, as well as church stone furniture designed by sculptors: parapet plates and capitols. Two store rooms were found there: one with a bronze bell and the other with farming and carving tools.

Finding of the plate fibula with stylized birds’ heads, testify of strong Germanic influence, if not about the presence about Germans in the military service of the empire.

Byzantium did not succeed in protecting its borders from the Slavs who settled the Balkans in the 7th century. On a hidden elevation above the



Fresco fragment, Jelica, Gradina, 6th century



German plate fibula, Jelica, Gradina, 6th century



Solid of Emperor Justinian II, Jelica, Gradina, Constantinople 567-578



Bell, Jelica, Gradina, Early Middle Ages



*Enkolpion,
Rudnik, 12th - 13th century*



*Hearth ceramics, Rosci,
Kulina, 10th - 11th century*

Zapadna Morava, on the Kulina locality, a Serbian settlement was discovered from the 10th - 11th century with characteristic ceramics decorated with troughs ('valovnice').

The valley of the Zapadna Morava came into composition of 'baptized Serbia' in the 10th century, in the reign of Duke Ceslav (927-about 950). According to the charters of the emperor Vasilije II from 1019 and 1020, Belgrade Bishop had 40 clerics (church, spiritual people) and 40 village mayors in Gradac, which is probably the earliest mention of Jelica's Gradina.

In Middle Aged Serbia Cacak region was a constituent part of Principality of Duke Stracimir, brother of Stevan Nemanja, and it was the territory in the farthest north of the state territory. There was a small fortification, a monastery was founded which preserved in its name the trace of the settlement. Before the monastery and its property were established there had been a settlement whose population had a grave yard built on the ruins of Roman thermal baths. In the graves of peasants modest jewelry from the 10th - 12th century was found. Crosses which can be folded of Syrian-Palestinian type (enkolpion) belong to accidental findings. The remains of Byzantium coins from village Zablace which date back the second half of the 12th and beginning of the 13th centuries are exhibited.

Armor shirt made of small rings was found in Cacak as a part of protection equipment of a warrior in middle Ages. Sward from Zablace has a double blade with a shallow groove, handle with a flat apple and cross. Mace was found in the village Goracici. Besides an iron spear, tops of arrows in different shapes are also exhibited.



There is preserved record of a nearby village Loznica which was in the Morava District in the 13th century. At the beginning of his reign king Stefan Milutin donated this village to the Hilandar Monastery, which was also confirmed by his

*Armor shirt and sword
of a warrior in middle ages*

EARRING

Gold coated silver earring composed of two strawberry like parts, exposed by rings of filigree wire and central part in the shape of a pyramid consisting of eight conical parts whose widen parts end in half calottes in the shape of a flower. The link between side strawberries and central cup is elaborated with winding wire and there are discs of filigree wire on both sides.

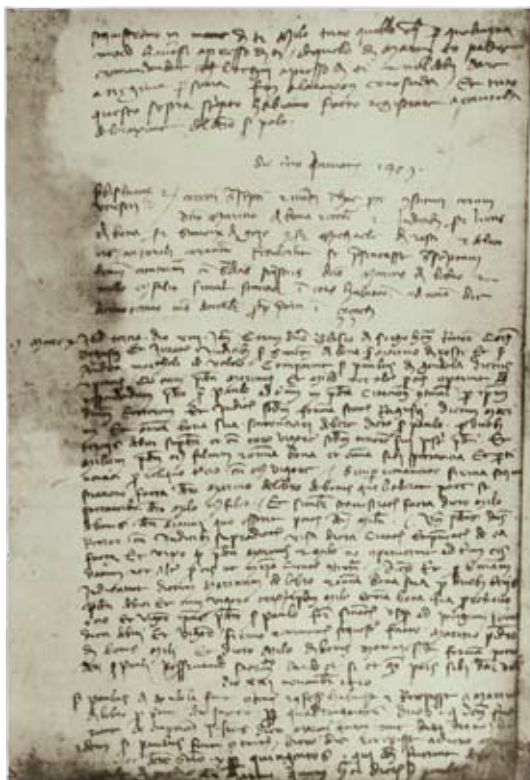
It belongs to the jewelry and coin remains of Emperor Dusan and coins from the time of the Emperor Uros, from the 14th century, the village Kostunici near Cacak.



Earring, Kostunici, 14th century



successors. In the Charter of Stefan Dusan from 1355 a half of the hunting ground near the Morava was added, while the other part probably belonged to the Gradac Virgin Mary Monastery. The emperor himself stayed in the vicinity of Cacak in 1354, most likely because of the fight with Ugrians about Rudnik which was rich in silver. In one of the battles his duke Djurdj Zugrovic also took part and a part of his tomb stone was found in Virgin Mary's Monastery. There are scenes from battles and hunting presented on the stone for mounting



First mentioning of Cacak, 18th December, 1408

a horse (binek tasi – Turkish) from Cacak, from the 14th - 15th century.

Socio-economic development of Serbian medieval state was characterized by development of agriculture, trades, mining and crafts. Crafts workshops manufactured products needed by landowners, mining and trade centers. Products of jewelry's workshops were under the influence of Byzantium and West Europe. Economic activity of exploiting ores of silver, copper and lead in one of



LANDOWNER'S RING

A massive silver ring with an inscription, decorated with interlaced and stylized floral ornament in the technique of nijela was found in founder's grave of the church in Majdan. It belonged to Rudnik landowner Nikola Kosjer. It dates back to the 14th century. Duke Oliver Kosjer who was mentioned in one record from 1457 was probably a member of this family.



Binjektas, 14th -15th century

BEAKER



A glass made of a little blurred glass, gradually wider towards the opening.

The bottom in a conical shape has applied garland on its edge. It is decorated with twelve vertical plastic grooves which narrows down and disappear completely in the lower part of the glass. A blue glass line is applied on the brim. It was later elaborated after casting in a mould. It is assumed that it was manufactured in Dubrovnik in the twenties of the 15th century.

the most important mining centers Rudnik started at the end of the 13th century and it is shown in the jewelry findings and medieval coins.

Remains of farming and carving tools from the 14th century have been found on the estate which once belonged to the church of Virgin Mary. From the remains found in Kostunici an earring and 15 examples of money from the time of emperor Dusan and some unspecified money from the time of the emperor Uros have been exhibited. A glass made of glass from the old church in Trnava



Earrings, Cacak, 13th - 14th century

belongs to the luxury import from costal cities and it was made in Dubrovnik in the twenties of the 15th century.

At the beginning of the 15th century economic activity in Serbia started flourishing, first of all farming, mining and trade. Near the Gradac Virgin Mary Church there was a square and settlement on the crossroads of the roads which were used for transporting loads of silver from Rudnik. Cacak was first mentioned on 18th December, 1408 in one invitation to Dubrovnik tradesmen Marin and Milo de Lebri to pay out debt receipt given two years before that. In the spring of 1455 Turkish army lead by Sultan Mohamed II occupied the town.