

**JOURNAL OF THE  
ACADEMIE INTERNATIONALE  
DE LA PIPE**



Edited by  
Anna Ridovics and Peter Davey

**VOLUME 3  
2010**

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ACADEMIE INTERNATIONALE  
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Académie Internationale de la Pipe  
Liverpool  
2010

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# **A brief introduction to clay pipe finds in Croatia with special attention to local pipes found at Fort Čanjevo in the Kalnik Hills**

*by Luka Bekić*

## **Introduction**

In the last two decades, archaeologists in Croatia have become increasingly aware of the clay tobacco pipe as an interesting archaeological find. Croatia has been border country between 'East and West' during the spread of smoking in the seventeenth century, so that various types of imported pipes can be found. Nevertheless, local production was also significant, although there are only two confirmed workshops at present. This paper will try to clarify the finds from Čanjevo fort and similar finds in Croatia, their techniques and styles, and sources of local pipe-making in the hope of discovering more workshops in future.

## **Clay pipes in Croatia**

Clay pipes have been found in various archaeological excavations in Croatia, most of them during urban excavations, some in fortress excavations and some in underwater archaeology projects. In Figure 1 typical clay pipes that can be found across the country are presented.

In the west and the south of the country, especially on the coastline, most of the pipes are of Italian types. The centres of production were sites in Venice bay, the city of Chioggia and the Venice hinterland where most of the 'potters' type pipes were produced (Boscolo 2000). The sea was a very effective medium for the trade, so Italian products reached the eastern coast of the Adriatic daily. Along the coastline Turkish pipes sometimes occur; these were also traded by merchant ships which were common guests in various Croatian ports at the time (Bekić 1999, 257). In the coastal cities western-type pipes are found, mostly made by the 'mysterious' WM maker, allegedly from Venice or London. But occasionally other western types and producers can also be found, such as the TD maker and various older Dutch and newer French western-type pipes.

Austro-Hungarian type pipes including the common, famous, black Schemnitz and white 'coffeehouse' types are found across the country, on the coast, but in the hinterland too.

In the hinterland the majority of finds are of Austro-Hungarian types, but in the north, especially in the north-east of the country, Hungarian (Debrecen types) and Turkish pipes can also be found.

Not much is known about the local, Croatian-made pipes. So far, it is established that various makers made clay pipes in the village of Zelovo near Sinj. It was a family business that lasted at least 200 years, up to the First World War (Širola 1934, Bekić 1999; 2000). Besides this known makers' centre there existed another similar group of pipe-makers in the village of Zagvozd, near Imotski (Tonković 2009, 4). It seems they used to make similar pipes to Zelovo types, but with minor differences in decoration.

Some of the clay moulds from Zelovo and Zagvozd have been preserved (Bekić 2000, Tonković 2009) so that at least the most recent production types, from the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century are familiar. There are though, some pipes found in archaeological excavations, which reveal an even older production in these villages from at least the eighteenth century (Bekić 1999, T.6.5-14, and others not published yet).

Besides these two identified local Croatian types, there are others which for the time being remain unidentified. They are found mostly in the Croatian hinterland, in the mountainous regions surrounding Bosnia. As usual, these finds are still not published by archaeologists, so a full overview of them is not possible. Hereafter, some of the finds that belong to these groups will be introduced.

## **Clay pipes from Fort Čanjevo (Figs. 2 and 3)**

During the excavations of the late medieval and post-medieval Fort Čanjevo, twelve damaged clay pipes were found. The pipes are very different from each other so they were probably made in different workshops.

The basic shapes are reminiscent of Turkish pipes. In the case of numbers 9, 12 or 15 it can be assumed that they were produced in some of the workshops in Turkey itself.

Otherwise, there is no pipe which has a certain claim to have been made in one of the workshops from the area of what is now Greece or Turkey (compare for example Brusić 1987, Robinson 1983; 1985). Comparisons could only be made with the wider area of south-eastern Europe, or more precisely with the area under the influence of the Ottoman Empire. However, it is certain that these pipes are better or worse copies of Turkish originals.

Regarding the fact that such pipes are rather unknown, it is difficult to state the period of manufacture with certainty. Having in mind the general dating of the pipes and the fort, they were probably all made during the second part of the seventeenth century or at the beginning of the eighteenth. However, several pipes could be dated more precisely because they were found in a waste dump or pit, a closed context dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697. This information is invaluable for the study of such pipes. Moreover, this group of pipes is also important because pipes did not appear in the Croatian area before the seventeenth century, which makes this



**Figure 1:** Common clay pipe types in Croatia. 1-10 Austrian types; 11-21 Italian 'Chioggia' types; 22-27 Italian 'potters' types; 28-34 Turkish types; 35-40 Croatian 'Zelovo' types; 41-45 Western types (drawn by K. Rončević).

group the oldest published group of pipes in Croatia, apart from the Turkish ones from the shipwreck near Bisag.

### Catalogue (Figs. 2 to 3)

BD = bowl diameter; SID = socket interior diameter; BWT = bowl wall thickness; BH = bowl height. Measurements in millimetres.

**1** - Sector A, Layer 2 (cave-in) of structure 1. BD:16, SID:7, BWT:3. Light brown fired clay. Hand-made? Carved, rouletted and stamped decoration. One linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić, Sekula 2005, T1.8, 79, 80; Bekić 2005b, 80).

The dating is uncertain. It was found in the cave-in of structure 1, which is an example of one of the last periods of life on the fort. However, if it was made by the same craftsman who made number 7 (Fig. 3, No. 7), which can be presumed by the clay structure and decoration, its dimensions suggest that it probably dates from the period around 1700 or before.

**2** - Sector H, Layer 1.

BD:14, SID:10. Orange fired clay, with green glazing on the outside. Mould-made, the traces of the trimming visible. Moulded decoration. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall.

Found in a stratigraphically irrelevant layer, in the fill down the slope (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-2).

**3** - Sector I, Layer 1.

BD:15, SID:9. Dark grey, well refined, fired clay. Mould-made. Rouletted decoration. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-3).

Probably a Turkish import. Found in a stratigraphically irrelevant layer, in the fill down the slope.

**4** - Sector C, Layer 3, west of the wall W7. SF 39.

BD:15, SID:9, BWT:3. Light brown fired clay. Mould-made. Carved, rouletted and stamped decoration. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-4).



Figure 2: Clay pipes from Čanjevo fort, Catalogue Nos. 1 to 6 (photographs by L. Bekić).

Found above the layer which is dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697. Probably dates from the first half of the eighteenth century.

**5** - Sector C, Layer 3, North of the wall W8. SF 43. BD:14, BWT:2, BH:37. Light brown on the outside and inside, grey at the break, well refined clay; moulded decoration? There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-5).

Found above the layer which is dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697. Probably dates from the first half of the eighteenth century.

**6** - Layer 1, South of the wall W 14. SF 55. SID:10. Dark brown fired clay, with the river sand temper. It is hand-made, rough in texture. The traces of attaching up the parts are visible; impressed decoration (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-6).

**7** - Sector C, Layer 4 - pit, north of the wall W8. SF 86. SID:11. Light brown fired clay. Hand-made (?). Carved and rouletted decoration (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-7).

Similar to number 1, possibly from the same workshop. Dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697.

**8** - Sector C, Layer 4 - pit, west of the wall W7. SF 97. BD:17, SID:9, BWT:3. Light brown, fired of refined clay. Mould-made; moulded decoration? The traces of painting in red (?) are visible. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić 2008, 192, T1-8).

Dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697.

**9** - Sector C, Layer 4 - pit, north of the wall W8. SF 101. SID:9. Light brown, fired of refined clay. Mould-made. Rouletted decoration. Polished surface. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić 2008, 192, 193, T1-9).

Dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697.

**10** - Sector C, Layer 4 - pit, between the walls W7 and W5. SF ? BD:16, BWT:4, BH:34. Light brown colour, orange at the break, poorly refined clay. Hand-made (?) The surface poorly finished. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (Bekić 2008, 193, T1-10).

Dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697.

**11** - Sector I, Layer 2, west of the wall W6b. SID:8. Black colour on the outside and reddish at the break. Poorly refined clay. Hand-made. Rouletted decoration. Ornament holes are filled with a white residue for the contrast in colour (unpublished).

Probable Turkish import. Found in a stratigraphically irrelevant layer, in the fill down the slope.

**12** - Sector C, Layer 4 - pit, west of the wall W27, SF 149. BD:16, SID:9, BWT:4. Light brown, fired of very refined clay. Mould-made. Smooth surface finish. Traces of red colour on the socket. Wheel-decorated. There is one linking hole through the bowl's wall (unpublished).

Dated by silver money of Leopold I, minted in 1697.

Čanjevo was a small feudal *burg* first built in the fifteenth century, later refortified as a border military fort, which contained the permanent garrison needed to defend the area from Ottoman incursions (Sekula 2008). Military occupation of the site lasted from the middle of the sixteenth to well into the seventeenth century. The most recent archaeological and historical sources witness a complete abandonment of the site before the middle of the eighteenth century. This is the time-frame for all of the pipe finds from this fort.

#### Similar clay pipes from other Croatian sites (Fig. 4)

There are more pipes of similar types, which were found by chance at various sites, mostly in northern Croatia.

**13** - Makar, Makarska. Chance find. BD: 17, SID:11, BWT:3. Grey coloured on the outside and red at the break. Made of purified clay. Mould-made (?) Ornament is simple facetting of the surface (unpublished).

**14** - River Kupa, Sisak? Chance find. BD:15, SID:9, BWT:2. Black fired clay. Mould-made. Rouletted and stamped decoration (unpublished).

Sisak is an old and important city with a military fort on the border of the Ottoman empire. It had a significant military presence even in the eighteenth century, especially on the right bank of the river where the so called 'Vojni Sisak' or 'Military Sisak' developed, as a city under military rule, which was later unified with a civilian counterpart on the other side of the river.

**15** - River Kupa, Sisak? Chance find. BD:18, SID:11, BWT:3. Grey on the outside and reddish at the break. Made of purified clay. Mould-made. Rouletted and stamped decoration (unpublished).

Probably of Turkish origin.

**16** - Grabrovnica, Pitomača. Chance find. BD:15, SID:7, BWT:4. Black fired clay. Mould made. Rouletted and stamped decoration (unpublished).

It is worth mentioning that in Grabrovnica there is still standing a 'military outpost' built in the eighteenth century and used in the times when this was a military border area, so called 'Krajina'. A military administration of this area started in 1758 and lasted until 1871. The use of this pipe, most probably by some soldier serving in Grabrovnica, should belong to this time-frame. This building is also famous because of the fact that great Croatian poet Petar Preradović was born there in the year 1818.



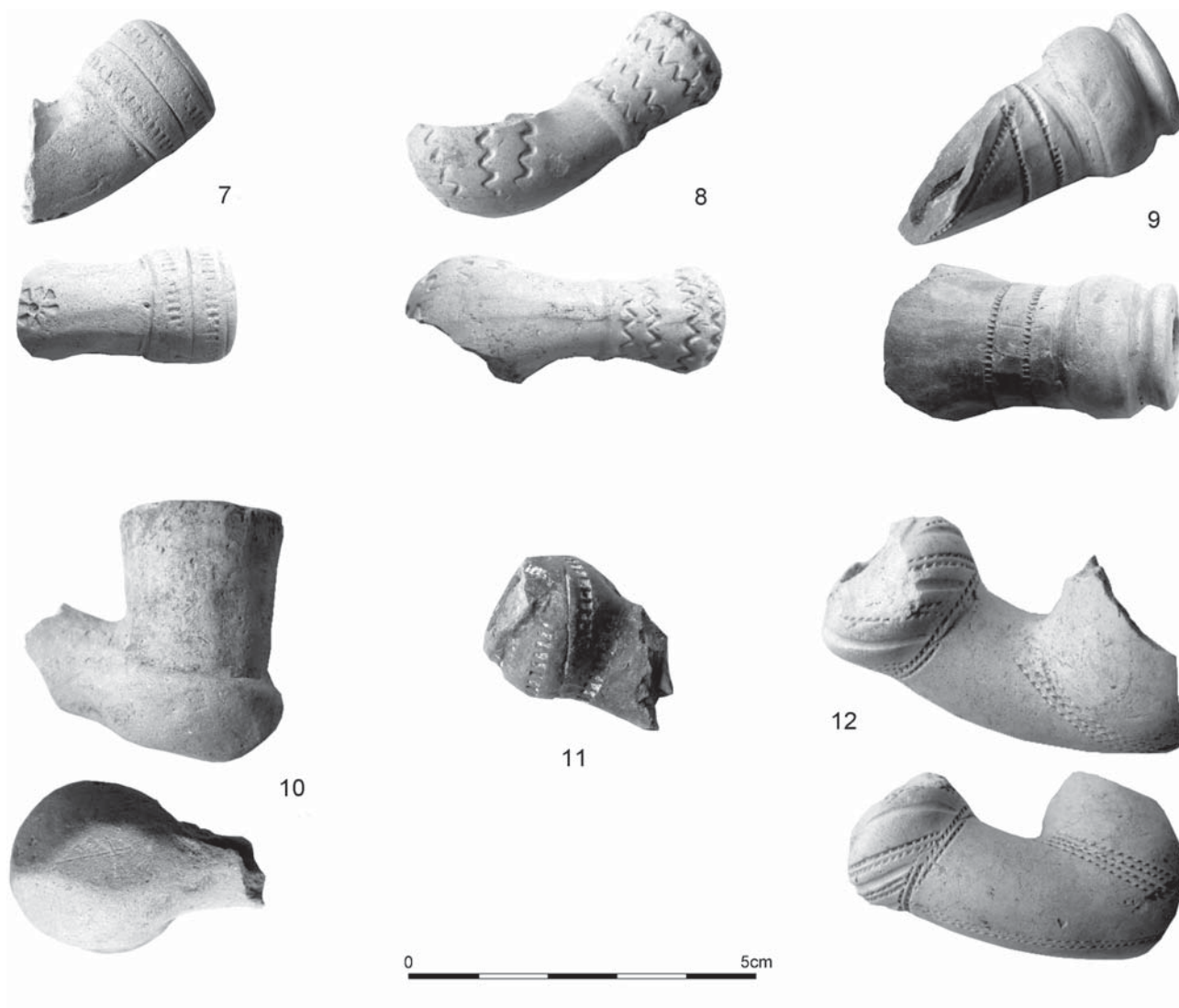


Figure 3: Clay pipes from Čanjevo fort, Catalogue Nos. 7 to 12 (photographs by L. Bekić).

**17 - Brezje VI, Varaždin. Chance find.**

SID:9. Light brown fired clay with light green glaze on the outside. Mould-made. Parts of a quoit on the upper part of the socket. The additional decoration is wheel-made (unpublished).

It is presumed that Brezje was a vast forest area south of the city of Varaždin in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, when this pipe might have been lost.

**18 - Dvorac, Sv.Helena. Chance find.**

BD:15, SID:8, BWT:4. Black fired clay. Hand-made (?) The additional decoration is carved and makes use of a wheel and a stamp. One linking hole through the bowl's wall (unpublished).

Most probably from the same workshop as numbers 1 and 7 from Čanjevo fort (Figs. 2, No. 1 and 3, No. 7 respectively). St. Helena was a fortified village on a military border of the Ottoman Empire. Its church tower served as a fortification during the sixteenth century. A manor house was built nearby after the Ottoman defeat. The pipe was lost here probably around the year 1700.

**Conclusion**

As has already been said, most of the pipes from this group belong to so far unexplored types, which can be mostly found in north Croatia. It is obvious that these pipes were made in different workshops, inspired by Turkish pipes, but with their own decoration and shapes.

As opposed to the Turkish ones, in this group there are no pipes with the separated keels, disc based, lily shaped, with makers' marks, etc. However, the turban shaped socket-ends, the small flower or sun motifs and decoration made with various stamps, wheels and carving are similar to Turkish types. There is no relief decoration, except some turban shaped socket-ends which are, in fact, made by rouletting with a wheel. Generally speaking, they are similar in terms of shape and additional decorating after pulling out of a mould.

The decoration consisting of oppositely placed little triangles (Čanjevo, number 5 - Fig. 2, No. 5) is typical of Turkish pipes from the second half of the seventeenth century (Bisag: Bekić 2000, t.5.3). Pipes with green

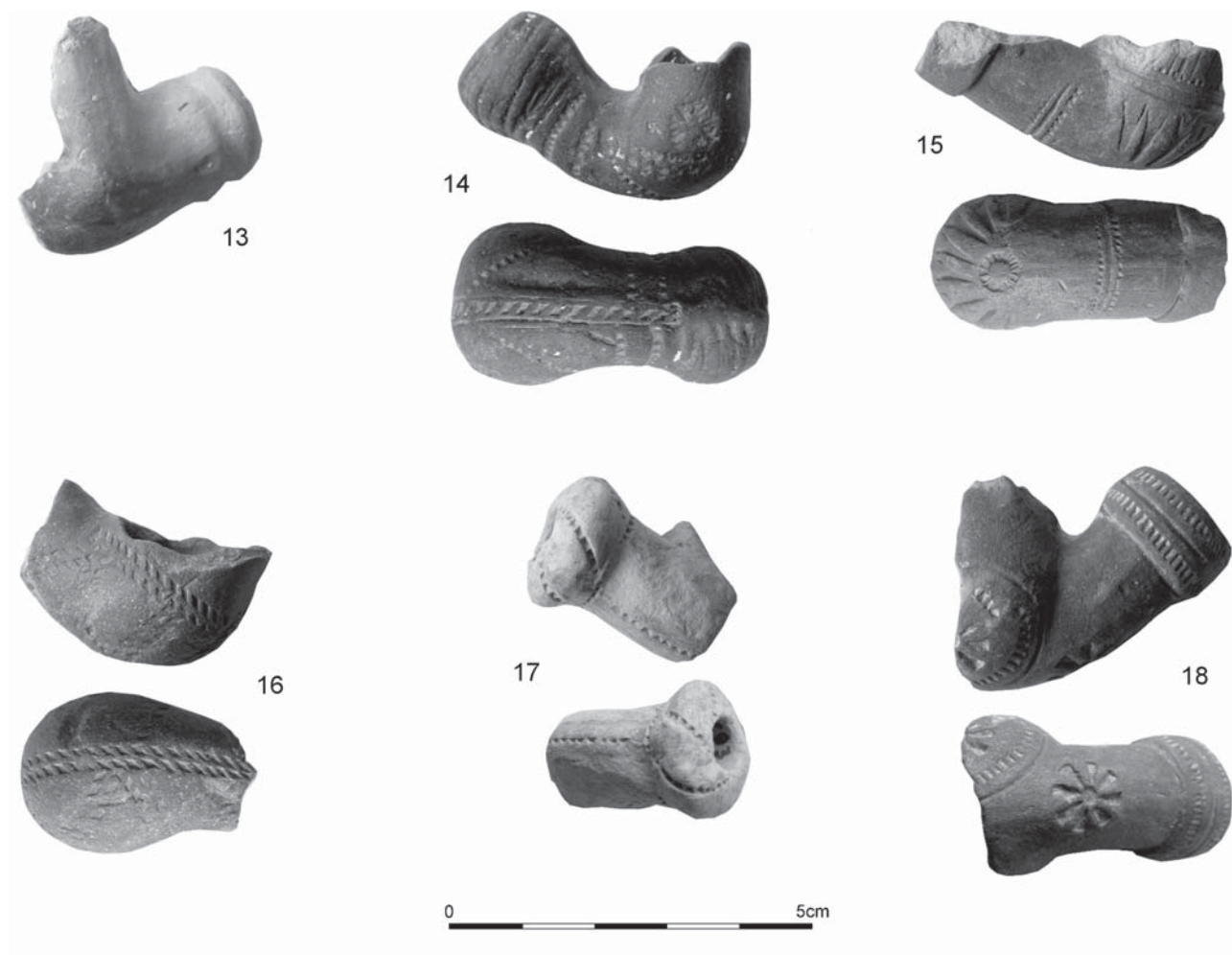


Figure 4: Clay pipes from other Croatian sites, Catalogue Nos. 13 to 18 (photographs by: L. Bekić.)

glazing, turbans and rouletted decoration are also found also at Ružica fort in Slavonia. However, despite the basic similarity with some examples from Čanjevo, these pipes are also products of original Turkish workshops (Radić and Bojčić 2004, 218, 219).

The impressed, simple floral or rosette decoration on the bowl and at the bottom (Čanjevo nos. 1, 5 and 7, also Sisak no. 15 and Sv.Helena no. 18) is visible on some pipes found in Nagykanizsa, which are attributed to the Turkish type and dated in the second half of the seventeenth century (Kovács 2004, 3. kep.15,16). Kovács thinks that such pipes might have been produced in *vilayet* itself or were brought somewhere from the Balkans (Kovács 2004, 127). Impressed, stamped flowers are found on 'Turkish proper' pipes from the seventeenth to nineteenth century (Robinson 1985, C5, 17/18th ct.; C113, 114, A29, 19th ct.), and they are probably the inspiration for the decoration on the Croatian products.

The similarity of some elements of Čanjevo pipe decoration with those from Zelovo, which probably originate from the seventeenth or eighteenth century is also interesting. The decoration of impressed, opposing rows of triangles as well as the conical terminals of the bowl (number 5 - Fig. 2, No. 5) is very often found on pipes from Zelovo

(Bekić 2000 t.6-6,8,10; 2001 fig. 20-4).

The same pipes are very rarely found in some scientific publications. However, several pipes found on the Schlossberg fort in Freiburg are very similar to the examples from Čanjevo. On these pipes there are examples with turban like socket-ends and some additional rouletted decoration, as well as decoration at the junction of the socket and bowl, also made with a wheel, as on pipe number 3 from Čanjevo (Freiburg-Schlossberg: Schmaedecke 1989, abb. 4-1, 3).

The final conclusion about the origin of the workshops of this interesting group of pipes cannot be drawn for now. Nevertheless, it is evident they were produced in the area of *Vojna krajina* or *Militärgrenze*, the area under military rule, bordering the Ottoman Empire. This region, which extended across the Adriatic up to the Carpathian mountains, served as a military buffer zone to the Ottoman empire. After the end of the Ottoman threat to Croatia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a whole, the Habsburg house used this strict military governance to rule easily with the region.

It is also evident that the use of this kind of pipe can be connected with Haramiyas and other permanent military

border troops. They are mostly found around forts and smaller military outposts, or towns with a strong military presence.

Some of the types are mould-made which implies a proper workshop with a master capable of making a larger series of pipes. These types were probably made in the villages or towns which supplied military troops stationed nearby. Other examples were handmade, and may have been made by the smokers themselves, in the times they could not obtain proper pipes.

For the time being, it is correct to call this group Borderland-type pipes, because of the fact that they are found mostly in the border areas of Croatia which were under military governance from the sixteenth to nineteenth century. It is to be hoped that new scientific publications will prove these assumptions.

### Acknowledgements

I thank Marinko Tomasović, Mladen Pereković and Robert Čimin for offering me the finds from other Croatian sites (Fig. 4, Nos. 13-18). I am familiar with some more unpublished examples from Posavina, Banija, Dalmatinska Zagora, Slavonia and western Bosnia but they are in the hands of their finders and unavailable for study.

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