

FIRST ENEOLITHIC IDOL FINDS IN DALMATIA

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The article deals with two unique finds of Eneolithic acephalic idols unearthed in the course of excavations in 2010 at the Buković – Lastvine site in Benkovac near Zadar. The idols have been only partly preserved. They were found close to each other in a very shallow pit on the very inner edge of a larger pit structure, but outside of any ritual context. They belong to a safe stratigraphic context composed of channelled pottery characteristic of the early Eneolithic in the eastern Adriatic.

KEY WORDS: *Eneolithic, Eneolithic idols, Benkovac, Buković – Lastvine*

Buković – Lastvine, a prehistoric site in Benkovac, has been known to the archaeological public for almost four decades thanks to the information published on it by B. Čović.¹ However, despite the fact that its significance with regard to the phenomenon of the eastern Adriatic Eneolithic was clearly underlined back then, to the present day it has remained a marginal issue in scientific literature dealing with such phenomena. Scientific circles owe the first more detailed information on the site to the excavations by Š. Batović and J. Chapman, conducted as a part of significantly broader (in terms of space and subject) research of the Ravni Kotari region as part of the Neothermal Dalmatia project.² The first trial-trenching that was carried out ahead of Š. Batović and J. Chapman's excavations was conducted on a small surface by M. Savić, at that time the Benkovac Regional Museum curator, but the results have never been published.³ The excavations conducted by Š. Batović and J. Chapman encompassed eight small, disjointed excavation surfaces covering two parts of the site. However, the entire excavation surface was not much larger than that covered by Savić's trial-trenching.

Although I do not intend to criticise the excavations conducted by Š. Batović and J. Chapman, I nevertheless have to point out that considering the entire site surface was 150,000 m² (300 x 500 m), as defined by the researchers,⁴ the total excavation intervention is extraordinarily modest and utterly insufficient for deriving any reliable conclusions on

¹ B. ČOVIĆ, 1983, 135.

² J. CHAPMAN, C. SCHWARTZ, J. TURNER, R. S. SHIEL, 1990, 32-33, 39-42; J. J. CHAPMAN, R. S. SHIEL, Š. BATOVIĆ, 1996, 194-210.

³ The finds and documentation are kept in the Benkovac Regional Museum. The archaeological public was informed about the conducted trial-trenching only thanks to indirect information from B. Čović; B. ČOVIĆ, 1983, 135.

⁴ J. CHAPMAN, C. SCHWARTZ, J. TURNER, R. S. SHIEL, 1990, 33.

the complex. The collected archaeological finds in the strictest sense, as well as the related bioarchaeological finds, were basically chronologically and culturally correctly determined, but a more subtle nuancing of the site's position among contemporary, culturologically and thematically associated eastern Adriatic Eneolithic sites failed to take place. In view of this, it is entirely clear why the archaeological material and related bioarchaeological finds, apart from the admittedly entirely correct chronological and basic culturological determination, still do not offer many possibilities for a more subtle defining of the position of the site among other contemporary, culturologically and thematically related eastern Adriatic Eneolithic sites. This is understandable in view of the generally modest amount of collected finds. There is also no information whatsoever on the habitation aspects of the site. These are the main reasons why I initiated additional excavations at this site in 2010, primarily with the aim of eliminating, or at least significantly reducing, the existing gaps. The excavation strategy was also in line with this.⁵ In the first excavation phase, which has already ended, a surface of 85 m² was opened, part of a sunken residential structure unearthed, and numerous archaeological and bioarchaeological artefacts collected. The clearly determined stratigraphic relations undoubtedly point to the chronological and cultural coherence of all parts of the deposit in the excavated site surface. However, since the excavation will continue in the coming years, and the results will be published in an integral form, on this occasion I will not go into detail, but limit myself only to two entirely unexpected and extraordinarily valuable finds, which at present seem to be the only samples of Eneolithic anthropomorphous sculpture in the entire eastern Adriatic area.

Both specimens were found in the lowest part of the deposit, the entire typological and stylistic characteristics of the pottery finds undoubtedly belonging to the eastern Adriatic early Eneolithic. Although they were found very close to each other, in an extraordinary shallow pit along the very inner edge of the larger pit structure, general find circumstances do not allow for the possibility of any ritual context. It was not possible to identify the existence of a related structure or construction. Other finds in the vicinity and their dispersion do not differ from finds in other parts of the excavated area. Although both specimens have been preserved only partly (it would be better to say that they have both been heavily damaged) and the preserved parts belong to various parts of the body, undoubtedly we are dealing with extremely stylised presentations of female figures.

The first figurine, with a reddish-brown surface and a dark grey cross-section, was made of well-purified clay but only the central part of the body has been preserved. In spite of this, it is absolutely clear that we are dealing with a flatly modelled figurine, conceived in the shape of two triangles set one above the other. Although the upper part of the figurine has not been fully preserved, it is very likely that it did not have a specially modelled head, and that we are dealing with a so-called headless figurine, i.e. a figurine with the head added afterwards. This is suggested by analogies, but also by the other figurine, as will become clear from the text below. The figurine certainly did not have specially modelled hands, but

⁵ The excavations were conducted as part of the scientific project "Early Prehistoric Periods in the Eastern Adriatic Area", financed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, with the participation of: D. Vujević, Assistant Professor at the Archaeology Department of the University of Zadar;

M. Čurković, head and curator of the Benkovac Regional Museum; archaeologists: V. Glavaš and J. Popović; and the following archaeology students at the University of Zadar: S. Dilber, A. Nakić, B. Lazinica, I. Huljev, K. Horvat, N. Očelić, B. Teklić, I. Volarević, M. Bodružić, and M. Sajatovski.

only pointed shoulders, as is usual with figurines of this type. The hips were shaped in the same manner, and I can only assume what the appearance of the lower part of the legs and feet which have not been preserved must have been like. It is very probable that the legs were not specially modelled and that this part of the figurine was modelled as a single part and then split by a shallow or deep vertical groove simulating the limbs. Even though other examples are known,⁶ this type of modelling is typical of figurines of this kind.

On the front side of the figurine, a shallow oval depression is clearly visible which, despite the clumsy positioning high above its anatomical position, undoubtedly suggests a navel. Far below the navel, a shallow horizontal line is cut which in a gentle arc to the lower part of the belly links the hips exactly at waist height. Due to the damaged surface, it is not possible to identify whether the line continues on the back of the figurine, although if it did, it would certainly have been linked with the line on the front. In view of this, I will abstain from speculation on the possible representation of a belt, article of clothing or the like. Below this line, exactly at the spot where the figurine was broken, another significantly shorter and more deeply carved, absolutely horizontal line is visible. At both ends, the beginnings of two more lines are visible that must have developed towards the lower part of the figurine, thus forming a geometric shape. Since only the initial parts of the two lines are visible, a quadrangular motif cannot be excluded. However, the presentation of a triangle appears more probable to me, as it is common in figurines of this type.⁷ In contrast to the first line, an interpretation of which I abstained from, there seems to be a clear intention of sexual determination of the figurine by representing the pubic area of a female body. Two more shallowly carved lines are still visible on the front side of the figurine. Both were made on the sides of the body, starting immediately above the waist and moving in a gentle arc towards the middle of the thorax and then towards the damaged shoulder zone. It is possible that they crossed on the upper part of the body. A line carved in the same way is also clearly visible on the left side of the back. The probable presence of a line on the right side of the back can only be assumed, due to the damaged surface. Pl. I, 1a-b.

The other figurine, with a dark-grey surface and cross-section, made of well purified clay, was much more damaged. Only the left half of the body has been preserved. The centre is visible in the cross-section, covered with another layer of clay, which significantly increased the figurine's original size and weight. This could perhaps be explained as a specific characteristic of the technical procedure applied in its modelling, but I would rather interpret it as a consequence of a certain clumsiness of the sculptor at the beginning of the modelling and him or her failing in their intention to improve the rather unsuccessful main form. This is also suggested by the first figurine, which was made in a completely compact mass of clay. The figurine's core, which was covered by another layer of clay, clearly shows traces of a groove intended for the subsequent addition of the head. The remains of the groove are significant not only for this reason but also for the purpose of comparison with the first

⁶ For example, see figurines from: Bešeňov, J. VLADÁR, 1979, Fig. 36-37; Salacea, I. ORDELICH, 1967, 147-152; N. TASIĆ, 1981, Fig. 6; Káposztásmegyer-Farkaserdőről, A. ENDRÓDI, 1988, 81-85; Szólád, M. BONDÁR, 2002, 2/2.

⁷ For example, see figurines from: Vinča, J. KOROŠEC, 1952, Fig. 1a-b, N. TASIĆ, 1981, Fig. 1-3; Salacea, I. ORDELICH, 1967, 147-152, N. TASIĆ, 1981, Fig. 1-37-8; Vučedol, T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1988, T. 1-2, T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1998, Fig. 47; Káposztásmegyer-Farkaserdőről, A. ENDRÓDI, 1988, 81-85; Bešeňov, J. VLADÁR, 1979, Fig. 36-37, etc.

figurine. Namely, even though it is much more damaged, the preserved part shows a complete typological correspondence with the equivalent part of the first figurine, thus enabling them to be typologically related to each other. As a result, the damaged parts of one figurine can be assumed on the basis of the existing parts of the other. In this sense, the preserved part of the groove for adding the head on this figurine suggests a correspondence of concepts in modelling both figurines, thus confirming the earlier classification of the first figurine as belonging to the same type of flat headless figurines. In the preserved part of this figurine, there are no representations except for a rather hypertrophied breast occupying the whole left side of the shoulder area and clearly determining the figurine's sex. Pl. I I, 1a-c.

Although both figurines have been preserved only partially, and the preserved parts do not belong to the same parts of the body, the unearthed figurines and all their typological characteristics are closely related, including their modelling concept. Consequently, in those parts where there is no overlap, they complement each other and allow for some general conclusions to be derived.

First. According to the size of the preserved parts, both figurines certainly belong to larger specimens of their type. The preserved height of the first figurine is 5.3 cm and its width is 6.4 cm, while the preserved height of the second figurine is 7.6 cm with a width of 4.6 cm. The interrelations of these values are very significant for the graphical reconstruction of the figurines and an assessment of their approximate sizes, particularly their overall heights. In this assessment, I will apply the procedure described below. Namely, as in completely preserved figurines of this type the width of the shoulder part equals, slightly exceeds or is slightly shorter than the width of the hips, in such instances it is only possible to make a graphic reconstruction of the upper part by extending the existing contours up to a height that will enable a balance between the widths of the shoulder area and the hips. On the other hand, the proportions of the entirely preserved figurines show that the values of their upper and lower parts are fairly balanced, i.e. the length of the figurine's bottom part is equal or slightly larger than the upper part. This means that the graphic reconstruction of the whole figurine can only be carried out by extending the contours of its existing part up to a value that will result in a balanced relationship between the upper and lower halves. Of course, this process can only be applied in cases when some of the mentioned parts have been preserved with acceptable values.

Starting from the size of the first figurine, only the central part of which has been preserved, and applying the above-mentioned principles of graphic reconstruction, in order to achieve a balanced relationship between the shoulder area and the hips, we should add approximately 4 cm to its upper part. In this way, following the contours of the preserved part, we would achieve a shoulder area width of approximately 6.5 cm, which corresponds to the hip width. Correspondingly, to achieve a balance in the size of the upper and lower parts of the figurine, we should add approximately 6-7 cm to its lower part. In this way, considering the preserved height and assessed values that need to be added, we arrive at an approximate height of 15-16 cm. Pl. III, 1.

The other figurine was preserved in much more modest proportions compared to its total size, but a fortunate coincidence is that one of the starting values can be assumed with a high degree of certainty. Namely, half of the shoulder area has been preserved which, measured from the top of the shoulder to the groove for adding the head amounts to 4.6 cm, which gives the figurine a total width of 9 cm in this part. Following the above-

mentioned principle of graphic reconstruction by extending the contours until reaching a balanced relationship between the shoulder area and hips, another 1.5-2 cm should be added to the existing part of the figurine, and after that another 8-9 cm in order to achieve a balanced relationship between the upper and lower parts of the body. Thus, given the height and assumed measurements that need to be added, we arrive at an approximate possible height of 18-19 cm. Pl. III, 2.

Second. Both specimens belong to the group of flatly modelled and completely stylised headless figurines in the shape of two connected triangles, without modelled limbs and without showing anatomic details. On the first specimen, the groove is not visible, which is understandable considering that only its central part without the shoulder area has been preserved. However, the flat modelling, general typological characteristics and close connections with the other specimen leave no room for doubt about it being an acephalous figurine. As for the other specimen, a fortunate circumstance is that the part with the groove for fixing the head has been preserved and is clearly visible. Its diameter cannot be determined, but the visible depth is 4 cm, meaning that its entire depth reaches more than half the preserved height of the figurine. Despite the fact that it is not possible to determine the groove's diameter, it obviously could not have been particularly wide, and it was certainly made with an instrument with a round cross-section. The rather short diameter of the groove and its extraordinary depth show that the figurine's head, independent of the material it was made of, was previously fixed to a suitable supporting construction (wooden or bone) and then added to the figurine.

Third. The sex of both specimens is clearly defined: in both cases, we are dealing with representations of female figures. The sexual attribution of the first figurine included the presentation of a triangle in the pubic area, while that of the second figurine included the modelling of breasts. Nevertheless, since due to the damage it is not possible to compare all the details, the above-mentioned differences in the representation of gender have to be taken conditionally. From a theoretical aspect, it is possible that they are expressed precisely through all the mentioned differences that are visible on the preserved parts. However, it is equally probable that the differences are limited only to an inconsistency in one sexual attribute, for example representing the breasts on one figurine and leaving them out on the other figurine, but it is also possible that they were completely equal even in this respect. As at present none of the possibilities is more probable than the others, the stated differences should really be taken conditionally.

Fourth. Slight variations and maybe some more obvious differences are visible in certain plastic elements. These are visible in the carved lines which in the upper part of the first figurine certainly have a purpose and a meaning, while on the second figurine there are no traces of them. I am almost certain that on the other figurine something like this was not even present. In spite of the fact that only a half of the upper part of the body has been preserved, if there had been a similar presentation, at least its peripheral parts would be visible on this fragment as well.

The described finds represent a unique phenomenon in the entire eastern Adriatic area during the Eneolithic, since in the course of all other excavations (to date a rather large number of them have been conducted) not a single such example has been unearthed. These finds are all the more significant, and at the same time intriguing, since they open a whole complex of problems, starting from the question of their primary source, the model and mechanism of their

distribution into this area, to the problem of the general cultural relations of the Adriatic and extra-Adriatic region and the appertaining cultures and cultural phenomena. In this complex, there is no doubt whatsoever concerning two questions: the first is the question of the cultural context of the finds, and the second is that of their relative chronological position. Since the two questions are very closely connected, I will first summarise the reasons why I believe that there is no doubt whatsoever concerning these questions.

As I have already pointed out, the finds were unearthed in an entirely safe and pure context, comprising shards of typical pottery decorated with channelled ornamentation. Pl. IV, 1-4. This type of pottery is familiar from a significant number of sites along the eastern Adriatic coast and its hinterland,⁸ and for a long period of time it symbolised the culturological content of the eastern Adriatic early Eneolithic. There is a general consensus on this matter in archaeological literature. Of course, there are some variations, particularly regarding the primary origin of the decorative technique, interpreting the process that resulted in its appearance in the Adriatic region, and linking this phenomenon with the autochthonous cultural background as opposed to viewing it as an entirely new manifestation.⁹

I first published my opinion on the whole problem area of the presence of channelled pottery and pottery with ribbed appliqués over layers characterised by traditional Hvar (Hvar – Lisičići) culture in a large number of sites when I published the results of the excavations in Ravlića Cave.¹⁰ Since I have argued my opinion in detail several times since then,¹¹ there is no need to go back over these issues at this point. Personally, I do not see any reason why I should amend or correct my interpretations. In addition, all recent excavations have produced more and more arguments in favour of these interpretations. I would only like to point out that this type of pottery is in my opinion the main and only characteristic of the eastern Adriatic early Eneolithic and that it cannot be equated with previous or later developments in terms of stratigraphy or culture. In cultural terms, it is connected with the final stage of the Hvar culture, which belongs to the early Eneolithic of the region not only chronologically but also as its actual bearer.¹²

The contextual connection of the figurines with this pottery group in itself implies their classification in the early Eneolithic, which at the same time also links them with the culturological phenomenon characteristic of this period in the eastern Adriatic area. Of course, connecting them with the culturological content on this spot by no means signifies their original belonging to the said area or content. What is more, as figural plastic on the entire eastern Adriatic is an extraordinarily rare phenomenon in the Neolithic, the very absence of any tradition would

⁸ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, 1970, T. I, 1-2, 4-5, T. II, 1-4, T. 1, -5, T. IV, 1-9; N. PETRIĆ, 1976, T. II, 7-8; B. ČOVIĆ, 1977, T. II, 2-3; S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, 1979, T. XLVIII, 1-7; Č. MARKOVIĆ, 1985, T. XXV, 5; B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 1991, T. XXVIII, 11-13, T. XXIX, 3-4, T. XXXI, 1-5, T. XXX, 1-4, T. XXXII, 1-8, T. XXXIII, 5-12; B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2005, T. XXXVI, 1-4, T. XXXVII, 1-5, T. XXXVIII, 1-5, T. XXXIX1-5, T. XL, 1-6; B. ČEČUK, D. RADIĆ, 2005, T. 64/1-2, 5-6, T. 78/2-7, T. 79/1-8, T. 80/1-6, T. 81/1-10, T. 84/1-10, T. 64/34, T. 78/1.

⁹ For an overview of the problem area, see: B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2003, 75 ff.

¹⁰ B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 1981, 49-52.

¹¹ B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 1991, 185-193; B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2000, 160-163; B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2003, 69-92; B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2005, 66-70.

¹² Although certain authors use the terms proto-Nakovana and Nakovana culture, I do not see any reason why I should amend or correct my standpoints, which I have elaborated on several occasions. S. FORENBAHER, 2000, 373 ff; S. FORENBAHER, T. KAISER, 2000, 17 ff; B. ČEČUK, D. RADIĆ, 2005, 223-231.

call into question its sudden development in the Neolithic. On the other hand, the typological characteristics of the finds, the specimens with which it is possible to compare them, and their concentration outside the narrower and wider eastern Adriatic area suggest strictly defined geographical and cultural surroundings. In this context, it should immediately be pointed out that the problem of acephalous figurines in the Eneolithic, but also in some earlier and later cultures, is by no means new in archaeological literature. Neither is the number of authors dealing with it, either as a primary problem or as a phenomenon within a broader thematic and spatial context, a small one.¹³ Indeed, it is a phenomenon by far transcending any regional setting. Nevertheless, I do not intend to view the finds from Benkovac in relation to the general problem of acephalous figurines, because this is a separate question with an extraordinary ideological background determining a religious practice which required the production of headless figurines. Of which material the heads were made, on which occasions they were added, whether religious practice always called for the placing of the same or different heads depending on the rite, etc. These are questions to which the finds from Benkovac offer no answers. However, one thing is sure. The development of such an ideology and religious practice is not confined to the eastern Adriatic area. It was a multiregional ideology and phenomenon which could have had its roots in a narrower, more regional context. The religious practices from different spatial and cultural surroundings and their corresponding psychosocial collectivities represent only an expression of the spreading of the basic idea.¹⁴ In an archaeological context, this is expressed in the dispersion over a large area of forms shaped according to the demands of the ideological background. Greater or smaller similarities (or differences) in narrower typological characteristics of the finds are, in my opinion, only a consequence of variations in interpreting the ideological background.

In view of this, I shall observe the finds from Benkovac in relation to specimens with which they can be more closely connected, not only on the basis of acephaly, but also on the basis of other typological characteristics, above all according to formal concepts expressed as a typological constancy.¹⁵ In this sense, I believe that it is most natural to compare the specimens from Benkovac with similar finds from the Baden culture. The Carpathian-Pannonian region has proved to be the area with the largest number and densest distribution of finds of this type.¹⁶ On the other hand, in other parts of the eastern Adriatic coast and its hinterland, at present there are no typologically comparable examples or cultures that produced this type.¹⁷ Consequently, the Baden culture area and the Baden culture as a whole prove to be spatially and culturally the most natural context with which finds from Benkovac can be compared. Finally, the typological characteristics of the found specimens are closest to the known finds from Vučedol¹⁸ and Vinča.¹⁹

¹³ J. KOROŠEC, 1952, 5-13; J. MAKKAY, 1962, 1-24; I. ORDELICH, 1967, 147-152; B. NOVOTNÝ, 1976, 130-138; J. VLADÁR, 1979; N. TASIĆ, 1981, 27-32; M. BONDÁR, 1999, 39-59; M. BONDÁR, 2000, 24-34; M. BONDÁR, 2002, 41-48; M. BONDÁR, 2006, 107-134; A. ENDRŐDI, 1988, 80-85; A. ENDRŐDI, 2003, 401-414; T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1988, 11-19; N. KALICZ, 1976; N. KALICZ, 1981, 232-256; N. KALICZ, 2002, 11-53, etc. The questions of territorial relations, possible sources, and cultural and other implications have been discussed in the above and other works, and the various points, concepts and interpretations presented.

¹⁴ In this context, T. Težak-Gregl's observation on the similarities of the Baden finds and those belonging to

the Cernavoda III culture is very interesting; T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1988, 18.

¹⁵ T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1988, 18.

¹⁶ For a site map, cf. M. BONDÁR, 2006.

¹⁷ Albanian finds from Burimas and Maliq are typologically not analogous to the specimens from Benkovac. M. KORKUTI, 1995, Pl. 82, 1-2, Pl. 94, 1-9. In my opinion, the same is also true of the acephalous Thessalian finds.

¹⁸ T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1988, T. 1-2; T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1998, 127, Fig. 47. Among the known specimens of Baden finds in Croatia, we should also mention the unpublished specimen from Sotin from the Srednje Polje site. My gratitude for this information goes to my colleague M. Ilkić.

¹⁹ N. TASIĆ, 1981, Fig. 2-3.

Of course, given the distribution area of the Baden culture, and particularly its southern border,²⁰ and the absence of any stopping places that would overcome this territorial division (or the present lack of knowledge about them), this connection looks very problematic. Nevertheless, we should not forget a certain number of pottery finds from Ravlića Cave IIC which, as I stressed earlier, should be connected with the Baden culture.²¹ At the same time, one has to point out that the examples from Ravlića Cave IIC do not belong to the original Baden culture, but can only be linked with it typologically. As a result, the problem of the models and mechanisms causing this remains open. It is possible that the Benkovac site, whose channelled pottery, despite its general correspondence with the same pottery category at other contemporary Adriatic sites, also has a series of special traits that open up different possibilities, will have a particularly important role in solving this problem. However, I cannot enter into these questions here.

Finally, the question is raised as to the period in which some form of relationship between the Baden culture and the Adriatic early Eneolithic was established, which resulted in the presence of the figurines in Benkovac. For Ravlića Cave IIC, I assumed synchronicity with stages B-1/B-2,²² which overlaps very well with the chronological position of finds of this type on the territory of the Baden culture and its setting.²³

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²⁰ S. DIMITRIJEVIĆ, 1979a, 184-185.

²¹ B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2003, 81.

²² B. MARIJANOVIĆ, 2003.

²³ N. KALICZ, 1976, 127; B. NOVOTNÝ, 1976, 132; N. TASIĆ, 1981, 32; T. TEŽAK-GREGL, 1988, 16.

Pl. I



b



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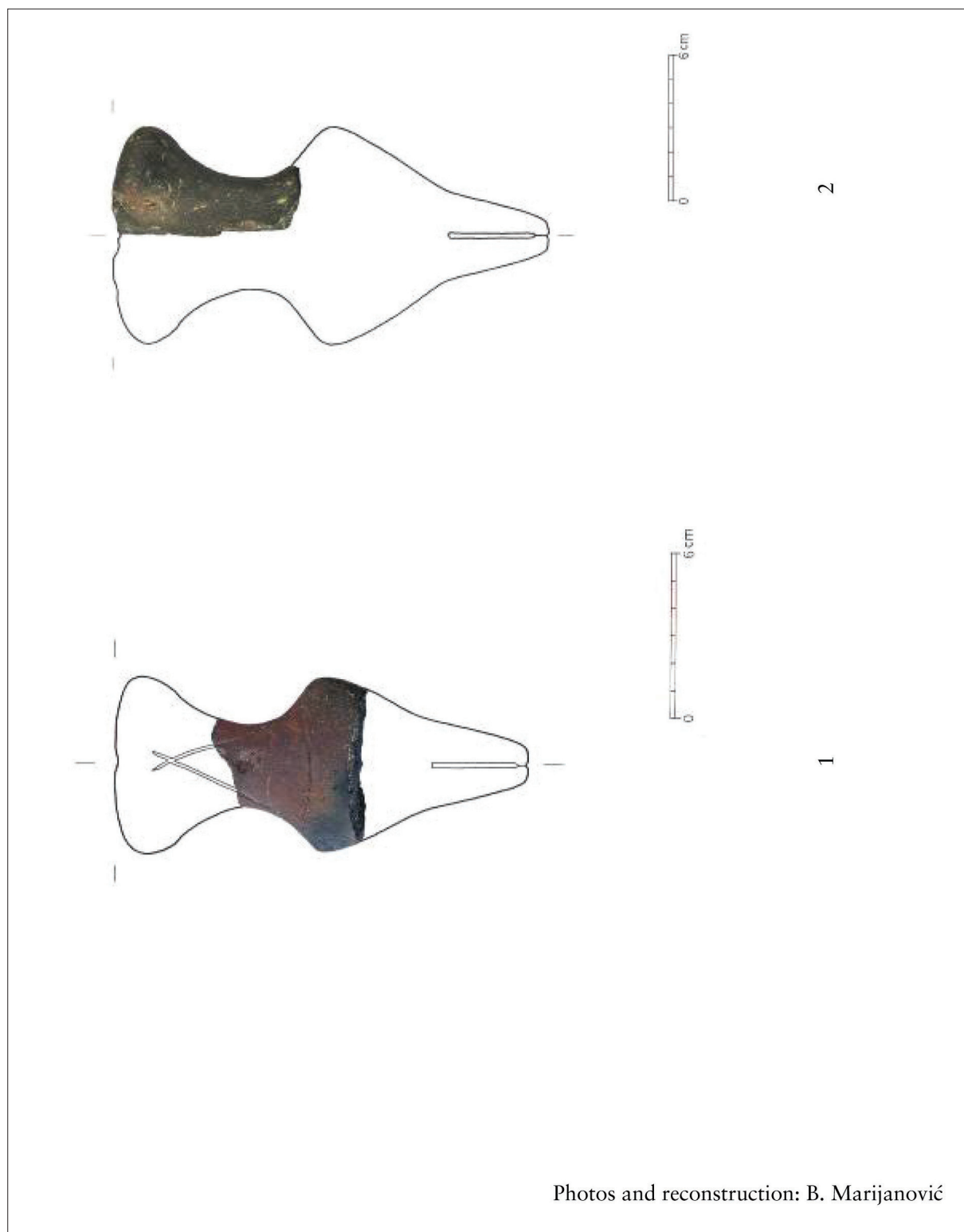
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Pl. II



Pl. III



Pl. IV



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PRVI NALAZI ENEOLITIČKIH IDOLA U DALMACIJI

SAŽETAK

Tijekom iskopavanja provedenog 2010. na eneolitičkom nalazištu Buković – Lastvine u Benkovcu kod Zadra, uz ostalu arheološku i bioarheološku građu pronađena su i dva primjerka karakterističnog tipa idola koji predstavljaju prve nalaze te vrste u eneolitiku na području istočnog Jadrana. Idoli su sačuvani samo djelomice, a pronađeni u najnižem dijelu depozita, u posve sigurnom i čistom kontekstu kojeg čine isključivo ulomci vrlo karakteristične keramike ukrašene kaneliranim ukrasima, a koja cjelinom tipoloških i stilskih odlika nedvojbeno pripada ranom eneolitiku istočnog Jadrana.

Premda su pronađeni vrlo blizu jedan drugomu, u posve plitkoj jami uza sam unutarnji rub većeg objekta jamskog tipa, opće okolnosti njihova nalaza ne dopuštaju mogućnost bilo kakvog ritualnog konteksta. Nije bilo moguće utvrditi postojanje nekog objekta ili konstrukcije te vrste s kojom bi bili povezani, a ni drugi nalazi u njihovoj blizini, kao i njihova disperzija, ni po čemu se ne razlikuju od nalaza na ostalim dijelovima istraživačke površine. Premda su oba primjerka sačuvana samo djelomice – bolje reći oba su teško oštećena – a sačuvani dijelovi pripadaju različitim dijelovima korpusa, nedvojbeno je da je riječ o krajnje stiliziranim prikazima ženskih likova. Oba primjerka pripadaju skupini plošno modeliranih i posve stiliziranih akefalnih figurina izrađenih u obliku dva povezana trokuta, bez oblikovanja ekstremiteta i prikazivanja anatomske pojedinosti.

Pronađeni idoli čine posve jedinstvenu pojavu na čitavom istočnojadranskom području tijekom eneolitika jer pri svim dosadašnjim istraživanjima, kojih je danas već značajan broj, nije otkriven niti jedan takav primjer, pa već sama njihova prisutnost otvara čitav kompleks problema počevši od pitanja njihova primarnog izvora, preko modela i mehanizma širenja na ovo područje, do problema općih kulturnih odnosa jadranskog i izvanjadranskog prostora s pripadajućim kulturama i kulturnim fenomenima. Naime, s obzirom na tipološke odlike, potpunu odsutnost usporedivih nalaza s jadranskog područja, primjerke iz Benkovca najprirodnije je uspoređivati s istovrsnim nalazima u okviru badenske kulture. Karpatsko-panonski prostor iskazuje se kao područje s najvećim brojem i najgušćom disperzijom nalaza ovoga tipa, pa se područje badenske kulture i badenska kultura u cjelini iskazuju kao prostorno i kulturno najprirodnije okruženje s kojim je nalaze iz Benkovca moguće povezati. Tipološke odlike pronađenih primjeraka upravo su najbliže poznatim nalazima iz Vučedola i Vinče.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: *Eneolitik, eneolitički idoli, Benkovac, Buković – Lastvine*

