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JETERBENK – NEBOJŠA TOWER
A HOARD OF SILVER COINS FROM GORIZIA AND AQUILEIA
FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 14TH CENTURY*

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The article was written during the doctoral studies at the University of Primorska (Koper), partly co-funded by the European Commission (The European Social Fund 2007–2013, Programme of Developing Human Resources). In the spring of 1993, a small hoard of 15 silver coins was discovered by chance beneath the peak of Jeterbenk, the hill above the village of Topol pri Medvodah / Topol near Medvode (Slovenia). The coins probably represent the contents of a soldier's purse, lost during an attack on the fortified Nebojša tower, which was built on the very top of the hill. The hoard is composed of coins of Count Albert II of Gorizia (Slo. Gorica, Ger. Görz) and the Aquileian Patriarchs. The contents show the monetary circulation at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th centuries, when many lords competed for supremacy in Carniola, as is otherwise shown by the presence of their coinage. The purse was lost after the year 1312.

Key words: Carniola, Jeterbenk, hoard, 13th/14th centuries, analysis.

Ključne riječi: Kranjska, Jeterbenk, ostava, 13./14. stoljeće, analiza.

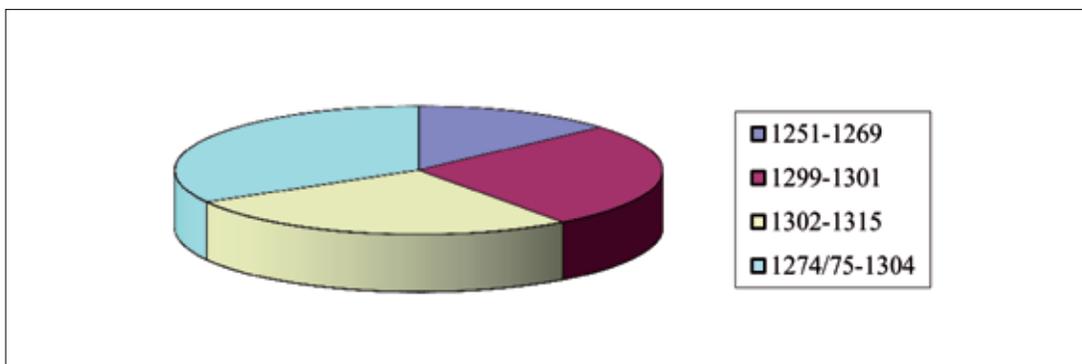
By chance, in the spring of 1993, approximately 25 m below the peak of Jeterbenk (774 m asl), the hill above the village of Topol pri Medvodah / Topol near Medvode (Slovenia), a hiker came across several silver coins that lay scattered some 30 m down the northern slope by a fallen tree. On the hill are the remains of the foundations of the Nebojša tower, one of the castles of the knights, or rather Spanheim ministeriales, of the Jeterbenk (= Hertenberg) family, who already had a stronghold in Ljubljana at the end of the 13th century.¹

¹ For the Jeterbenk/Hertenberg family, see: KOMAC 2006: 117-119, 122-123, 160, 165-167, 172, 188, 194, 197, 200-202, 207, 212, 217-219, 220-221, 226, 263; KOS 2005: 144-146; VOLČJAK 2006.

In subsequent, still unpublished, studies of the mobile material spanning the period from the 3rd to the 20th centuries, it was established that, on the peak of Jeterbenk, stood the tower of Nebojša, otherwise known from sources (*Neboyz*; *Neurysse*; *Newoisse*), but for which the site had not been located. On ridges below the peak are the remains of the old castle (*Hertenberch castrum*; *allt Herttemberg*; *alt Herttemberg*) and the new castle of Jeterbenk (*new Hertenberch*; *new Herttemberg*; *new Herttemberg*) and the *propugnaculum* common to both of them.² The Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia was informed about the find of coins, and it was promptly delivered there, after the discovery, for professional analysis. Partial preventive conservation had already been undertaken on the coins. The staff of the Numismatic Cabinet succeeded in acquiring the coins for the systematic collection, although two years afterwards another coin was found, which is currently in private ownership.

The find of silver coins contains mostly coins of the Aquileian patriarchs Gregory (*Gregorio*, 1251–1269), Peter (*Pietro*, 1299–1301), and Ottobon (*Ottobono*, 1302–1315), and coins of the Count of Gorizia, Albert II (1274/75–1304). The denars are mostly very well preserved and had not been in circulation long. The coins discovered were typical representatives of the coinage that was in circulation at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th centuries in Carniola, which is also represented by other contemporary coin finds from this region.³

Two mints are represented in the find. Most of the coins (66.66%) were minted in Aquileia for the Aquileian Patriarchate, while the remaining 33.34% of the silver coins were minted in Lienz for Albert II. The representation of the earlier mint lords grew steadily – Gregory (13.34%), Peter (26.66%) – while the final lords were represented as follows: Ottobon (26.66%) and Albert II (33.34%). The one third of the find represented by the coins of Albert II indicates the strong desires of the Gorizian counts to dominate Carniola after the death of Ulrich III of Spanheim.



Statistical overview of hoard contents by minting periods of individual mint lords.

The loss of the purse of silver coins on the northern slope of Jeterbenk can be placed in the period when individual nobles joined various groups that wished to rule Carniola: the Aquileian Patriarchate with the Tyrolian-Gorizian counts, the Spanheims, and the Holy Roman Emperor.

² For the names and currently known locations of the castle buildings, see: GASPARI 2006: 39-40; KOS 1994: 23; 2005: 144; RADEŠČEK 2006: 67-68; STOPAR 2000: 80-81.

³ Unpublished. Data about the find and site are stored in the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia. A publication is also being prepared that will publish the mediaeval coins discovered in the Republic of Slovenia.

The archaeological and monetary material contains a relatively large number of arrowheads of various types, and it is confirmed from historical sources that the lords of Jeterbenk were often in conflict with their neighbours or other lords.⁴ The owner of the purse can thus be presumed to be a soldier who, with others, unsuccessfully attacked one of the fortified buildings, or several simultaneously. The attack itself, through the analysis of the purse contents and its interpretation, can be placed in the period after 1312, but before the accession of the new Aquileian Patriarch, Pagano (1319-1332).

Medieval coin hoards with such content are very rare in the former Carniola. At the same time, finds of such coins from the 13th or 14th centuries from urban centres, where systematic archaeological excavations are common, are also very rare. This indicates the poor rate of microlocation of sites, while it is also undoubtedly a result of the fact that, during individual archaeological excavations, it is possible to note the neglect of coin finds and, hence, their extremely poor documentation (Kos 1997: 98). A change, however, can be noted in the material from more recent archaeological excavations that have been carried out in the last several years in the Republic of Slovenia.⁵

The cause of the loss of the purse can be sought in the mutual conflict between the Jeterbenk and Loška (Lož) estates, while the owner can be placed among the mercenary soldiers of the Aquileian Patriarchs and the Counts of Gorizia, although the cause of the specific battle cannot be established. Otto Hertenberg (+ after 1327) had transferred the family business to Ljubljana as early as 1292 (Kos 2005: 145), from which it can be concluded that, at the moment of the attack, he was not even present on the property.

⁴ Similar mutual conflicts are also known from archival sources, cf.: **NEDOSTAJE NASTAVAK**.

⁵ Investigations into the monetary circulation throughout the territory of the Republic of Slovenia have already been carried out to some extent, although merely on the basis of written or archival sources and hoards found in the past (Kos; LUSCHIN; PICHLER). The present-day methodology and new discoveries give a new dimension to this subject, as an accurate picture of the monetary circulation is shown primarily by individual finds. The latter are more frequent at archaeological excavations due to an increased interest in later periods in Slovenian archaeology.

ABBREVIATIONS

Ber. – BERNARDI, G. 1975 – *Monetazione del Patriarcato di Aquileia*. Trieste, 1975.

CNA – KOCH, B. – *Corpus Nummorum Austriacarum*. Band I, II. Vienna, 1994.

CNTM – RIZZOLLI H. 1991 (=) – *Münzgeschichte des alptirolischen Raumes im Mittelalter und Corpus Nummorum Tirolensium Mediaevalium*. Band I: Die Münzstätten Brixen/Innsbruck, Trient, Lienz und Meran vor 1363. Bolzano, 1991.

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CATALOGUE

Middle Ages**Secular Authorities****Central Europe****Tyrol****Counts of Gorizia****Albert II (1274/5–1304)**

1–3	Denar	no year	Lienz	<i>CNA K 14</i> <i>CNTML 28</i>
4	Denar	no year	Lienz	<i>CNA K 14</i> <i>CNTML 31</i>
5	Denar	no year	Lienz	<i>CNA K 15</i> <i>CNTML – (ad 47)</i>

Church authorities**Archbishopric****Aquileia****Gregorio (1251–1267)**

6	Denar	no year (after 1256)	Aquileia	<i>Ber. 19a</i>
7	Denar	no year (around 1269)	Aquileia	<i>Ber. 22a</i>

Pietro (1299–1301)

8–11	Denar	no year	Aquileia	<i>Ber. 33</i>
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Ottobono (1302–1315)

12–15	Denar	no year (after 1312)	Aquileia	<i>Ber. 35c</i>
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1. NKNMS LJ 70349. Double stamped. Ob.: + ALBERTVS ★ COMES;
Rv: +GORICIE ★ DE LYONÆE. Wt.: 0.98 g. φ 21 mm. Axis: 2.
Very well preserved.
2. NKNMS LJ 70351. Ob.: + ALBERTVS ★ COMES;
Rv: +GORICIE ★ DE LYONÆE. Wt.: 0.96 g. φ 21 mm. Axis: 8.
Very well preserved.
3. NKNMS LJ 70350. Double stamped. Ob.: + ALBERTVS ★ COMES;
Rv: +GORICIE ★ DE LYONÆE. Wt.: 0.95 g. φ 20.5 mm. Axis: 1.
Very well preserved.
4. NKNMS LJ 70352. Ob.: + ALBERTVS ★ COMES;;
Rv: +GORICIE ★ DE LYONÆE. Wt.: 0.96 g. φ 21.5 mm. Axis: 7.
Very well preserved.
5. NKNMS LJ 70348. Double stamped. Ob.: +ALBERTV'. COMES: GORICIE;;
Rv: ★DE★ – ★LY★ – ★ON★ – ★ÆE★. Wt.: 0.92 g. φ 20 mm. Axis: 12.
Very well preserved.
6. NKNMS LJ 70345. Ob.: •GREGO RIV?PA•
Rv: •AQUVIA • LEGIA •. Wt.: 0.77 g. φ 19 mm. Axis: 11.
Well preserved.

7. NKNMS LJ 70346. Ob.: **·GREGO RIV·PA·**;
Rv: **·AQVI· LECIA·**. Wt.: 0.91 g. ϕ 21 mm. Axis: 7.
Very well preserved.
8. NKNMS LJ 70344. Ob.: **·PETRVS ·PATK·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 1.00 g. ϕ 21 mm. Axis: 1.
Very well preserved.
9. NKNMS LJ 70342. Ob.: **·PETRVS ·PATK·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 0.99 g. ϕ 22 mm. Axis: 9.
Very well preserved.
10. Pr.l. Ob.: **·PETRVS ·PATK·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 0.99 g. ϕ 21.5x21 mm. Axis: 5.
Very well preserved.
11. NKNMS LJ 70343. Ob.: **·PETRVS ·PATK·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 0.88 g. ϕ 21 mm. Axis: 8.
Very well preserved.
12. NKNMS LJ 70339. Ob.: **·OTORO HVS·PA·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 1.00 g. ϕ 22x21 mm. Axis: 5.
Very well preserved.
13. NKNMS LJ 70341. Ob.: **·OTORO HVS·PA·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 1.00 g. ϕ 21 mm. Axis: 2.
Very well preserved.
14. NKNMS LJ 70338. Ob.: **·OTORO HVS·PA·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 0.86 g. ϕ 22 mm. Axis: 5.
Very well preserved.
15. NKNMS LJ 70340. Ob.: **·OTORO HVS·PA·**;
Rv: **·AQVILE GENSIS**. Wt.: 0.99 g. ϕ 19x21.5 mm.
Axis: 11. Very well preserved.

PLATES⁶

Albert II (1274/75–1304)



⁶ The coins are photographed at a 1:1 scale. Archives of the Numismatic Cabinet of the NMS. Photo: Matija Pavlovec.

Gregorio (1251–1269)



Pietro (1299–1301)



Ottobono (1302–1315)



JETERBENK-KULA NEBOJŠA. OSTAVE SREBRNOG NOVCA S PODRUČJA GORICE I AKVILEJE S POČETKA 14. STOLJEĆA

Na brijegu pod kulom Nebojša, poznatom iz pisanih izvora, a koja se nalazi blizu sela Topol pri Medvodah, 1993. godine pronađena je manja ostava koja je sadržavala petnaest komada srebrnog novca. Kula do tada nije bila lokalizirana, a u njoj blizini otkriveni su i ostaci starog i novog grada Jeterbenk. Svi građevinski objekti pripadali su *spanheimskim* ministerijalima Jeterbenskim. Ostava sadrži srebrni novac goričkog grofa Alberta II. i akvilejskih patrijarha. Denariji su, vjerojatno, činili sadržaj kese. Najmlađi novac iz godine 1312. predstavlja *terminus post quem* za vrijeme kad je novac izgubljen. To je vrijeme sukoba više plemićkih obitelji koje su se borile za prevlast nad pokrajinom Kranjskom.