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FINE ARTS

1. NECKLACES AND PENDANTS OF THE METAL AGE ON THE TERRITORY OF ROMANIA

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Abstract: *The present paper will refer to an aspect of processing metals on the territory of Romania, in Bronze Age and Iron Age (the second age having been studied up to the moment when Prehistory ended: 1st century B.C., being continued by Antiquity). Unfortunately, few pieces were found in settlements and in necropoleis, so it is difficult to attribute the artifacts of the Metal Age to one or other of the existing cultures, though the region where they were produced can be mentioned. Consequently, their study can lead to another classification than the chronological one, and that is of the field of ornamental arts in metal. We will focus only on two types of objects that embellish the neck and the chest: necklaces and pendants, which help us create a vivid image of this important artistic field of the Iron Age on the territory of our country, these two joining the other important types of jewels: bracelets, rings, fibulae, phaleras.*

Key words: *au repoussé, en violon, torques, saltaleone, tutul*

1. Introduction

Composed of the Bronze Age and Iron Age, the entire Metal Age is the period during which the first signs of a statal-urban revolution appeared, and stone tools are replaced with those of metal (a process started at the end of Eneolithic). Even before the middle of the Bronze Age, the Carpathian-Danubian space has become one of the important metallurgical centres of Europe. During Bronze Age⁴¹, the metallurgy of this metal that got into Romania has developed step by step. Replacing copper tools and weapons, the ones from bronze, much more resistant and more fluid, will mark the qualitative step forward in the field of work productivity. Moreover, the processing of gold and silver objects reflects the social status of individuals and the complexity of the society to which they belong. Regarding the technique, the decoration of bronze objects was made through engraving; *au repoussé* is only indicated by the thin layers of metal – consequently, it will be applied on golden objects (where engraving is more rarely met). Regarding the aspect, geometry is the one

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⁴¹ The earliest dating: 3 500, but for the territory of Romania: 2 500/2 000/1 800 – 1 200/1 150/1 000/850/700 B.C. Cf. Marija Gimbutas, *Civilizație și cultură. Vestigii preistorice în sud-estul european*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1989, p.140; Dinu C. Giurescu, *Istoria ilustrată a românilor*, București, Ed. Sport-Turism, 1981, p.24-25; Constantin C. Giurescu, Dinu C. Giurescu, *Istoria românilor din cele mai vechi timpuri și pînă astăzi*, București, Ed. Albatros, 1971, p.30; R. F., in Radu Florescu, Hadrian Daicoviciu, Lucian Roșu (coord.), *Dicționar enciclopedic de artă veche a României*, București, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980, p.69, s.v. bronzului, epoca; Ion Miclea, *Dobrogea*, București, Ed. Sport-Turism, 1978, p.24; Vladimir Dumitrescu, *Arta preistorică în România*, vol.I, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1974, p.273

that prevails, just like in the case of ceramics, the motifs are angular (a herringbone model, triangles, rhombus) or curves (circles, spirals). And figurative elements are very rare. Moreover, the tectonic conception⁴² of placing the ornamentation exists also in the case of metal objects.

2. Discussions

The beginning of the metallurgy of bronze, which got in through the process of acculturation, marks a change from all the points of view of the society towards the Eneolithic period. The phenomenon started to manifest itself starting with the imitation in copper of the forms which are typical for bronze art. Anyway, exactly the process of passing from the metallurgy of copper to the one of bronze is difficult to reconstitute. There are rare bronze artifacts; we are referring now to the local imitations of the projects brought from the southern world. But even before the spreading of the metallurgy of bronze, in the workshops found in Transylvania, copper, gold and silver were processed (through knocking for the time being). Though it was poor in discoveries, the metallurgy of the early period has brought this alloy – bronze – with an increased hardness compared to the one of copper, and also the diversification of forms.

Step by step, bronze has become a mass product. During the middle period, the development of bronze metallurgy is largely met, but there are also objects made of gold and silver, for the aristocracy. Transylvania became an important European centre of bronze metallurgy. Bronze deposits and thesauri of gold pieces and also isolated discoveries become more and more frequent. The metallurgy of bronze evolves and becomes even better in the late Bronze Age: typologically speaking, but also technically, the most used knowhow is now casting; the distribution networks of bronze are spread around the great centre from the Western Carpathians and the Northern ones, thus encapsulating the entire territory of nowadays Romania. The metallurgy of precious metals also evolves.

Step by step, the metallurgy of iron replaces the one of bronze, it became generalized, at the beginning imitating the forms of bronze pieces, afterwards, it invented its own forms. In Iron Age⁴³, we can distinguish the production of jewelry made of silver, these objects are typical for metallurgical art. In the first period of Iron Age⁴⁴, Hallstatt⁴⁵, the first iron products appeared, for the time

⁴² Starting with Prehistory, we have noticed an essential feature which will become very important in Antiquity: unity – in a work "spontaneous regarding feeling, powerful from the point of view of expression, true and adequate regarding shape, thus becoming the perfect ensemble". Cf. Mircea Ștefănescu, *Arta desenului. Studiul portretului și al corpului uman după model*, Iași, Ed. Artes, 2015, p.52

⁴³ Approximately 1 150/1 000 – 50/70 B.C.: the date of the creation of the Dacian State. Cf. Dinu C. Giurescu, *op. cit.*, p.25; Constantin C. Giurescu, Dinu C. Giurescu, *op. cit.*, p.30; Vasile Pârvan, *Getica. O protoistorie a Daciei*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1982, p.174; H. D., in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, s.v. *fierului, epoca*

⁴⁴ Approximately 1 150/800 – 450/300 B.C. Up to the year 800 B.C., there is a period which is often confused with the end of Bronze Age. Cf. H. D., in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, s.v. *fierului, epoca*

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*

⁴⁵ Era named after the great necropolis from Hallstatt (Austria), in the classification of Iron Age from 1874, made by Hildebrand. Cf. A. Vulpe, M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița, A. Lászlo, Cap.III. *Epoca metalelor*, in Mircea

being, they were imported pieces which did not rival with the ones made of bronze – whose metallurgy reaches its peak at the beginning of Hallstatt. The iron objects which appeared at first (no artistic objects!) were found in the tumular necropolis from Lăpuș (a Celt) and in the deposit from Rozavlea (a knife's grip), then the bronze dagger from Tirol, the bronze pin with a disk-like head, with an iron kernel, and a sword, both from unknown places, like it is the bracelet from the necropolis from Bobda (Banat), and the knife from Căuș (Satu Mare county).

The bronze products from early Hallstatt is characterized by the reduced technique and poor quality metal. The ornaments become more and more abstract, symbolism plays a reduced role and it disappears in the obvious emphasized schematization of motifs and ensembles. The newly-appeared iron products are now local imitations of those made of bronze (swords, Celts – axes with longitudinal handle) which were made through fount; step by step, knocking will extend as a technique which is specific to iron. The forms of the objects is still a simple one, not very many shapes appeared, but they are part of an autochtonization of iron metallurgy, transmitted from Greece or from the coasts of Asia Minor. Different tools and weapons appear (knives, axes with small wings, two sided axes, chisels, sickles, scabbards), there is less jewelry. For it, gold is also used, processed from Neolithic times, leaving us nowadays some discoveries which are difficult to date (probably the bracelets of the type Firiteaz belong to this period of transition, the phaleras from Săcuieni and Grăniceri, the pot from Biia, the thesaurus from an unknown place from Bihor county⁴⁶). Anyway, the discoveries of the artifacts from gold and silver start to become lesser and lesser during this period⁴⁷.

The phenomenon which was started before, involving the schematization and simplification of bronze objects, will become more and more intense, reaching its peak in the middle of Hallstatt, when the Dacian protohistory started. The deposits become lesser and lesser in Transylvania. But, the great development starts (an entire revolution) of the metallurgy of iron, with a rich and divers typological repertoire. The weapons made of bronze are replaced by those made of iron, created using a technique which is specific to iron: knocking. Bronze was used for jewelry and pots. This continuous development of metallurgy will take place on the entire surface of the nowadays Romania, leading to the disappearance of objects made of stone. The art of gold left us isolated thesauri and pieces, which are taken from their cultural-archeological context, this fact has led to the difficulty of their dating.

In the late period of Hallstatt, one can notice a special development of iron metallurgy. What is characteristic is the replacement of bronze weapons with iron ones, some of them extremely well decorated, as we are going to see

Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Alexandru Vulpe (coord.), *Istoria românilor*, vol.I, *Moștenirea timpurilor îndepărtate*, București, Academia Română, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2010, p.289

⁴⁶ *Idem*, p.349

⁴⁷ Alexandra Țârlea și Anca-Diana Popescu, in Rodica Oanță-Marghitu, *Aurul și argintul antic al României*, catalog de expoziție, Râmnicu-Vâlcea, Ed. Conphys, 2014, p. 68

from the examples offered in the chapter about metal artifacts of the entire metal Age. Iron is directly obtained from the mineral, without the phase of cast iron. The reduction in two steps, with forging, was used for obtaining a high level of purity. The furnaces were similar to those for charcoal: simple bedstones created in the ground, with canals for collecting metal and leading to an external hole in which the lump was formed. On this bedstone, there were alternative layers of crushed mineral of iron and wood charcoal, then everything was covered in ground. Through the canals, the fire was lit and the metal produced through reduction flew through the same canals until it reached the hole for the lump (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 127). Iron metallurgy becomes generalized in the second period of Iron Age⁴⁸, Latène⁴⁹; the new technique of processing iron through the thermic treatment of metal. Except common objects, what is special is represented by luxurious pieces from the Royal Tomb from Agighiol. During Latène period, golden objects are very few, compared to those from Bronze Age and Hallstatt. The existence of silver art is well documented.

Regarding the ORNAMENTAL ARTS of this period, of Metal Age until the 1st century B.C. (the moment which marks the ending of Prehistory and the beginning of history itself on these territories), except for CERAMICS, what is important is the **ART OF PROCESSING METALS** (which will be called TOREUTICS starting with the future Ancient Era), which stops in our case only to weapons and metal pots (though most of them are not decorated, so that they cannot be actually called *art*), and a few other small objects (mirrors, ornaments applied on the wall) (there weren't found any metal statues). It is also completed by the chapter **JEWELRY** (we will discuss about some of them in the following paragraphs). Technically, metal objects were made especially by founting in shapes and rarely by knocking, while the technique of their decoration was, in most cases, engraving (for bronze objects) and the technique *au repoussé* (for those with gold layer). In general, in the used décor, we notice the same geometrical-spiral essence that also existed in the case of ceramic art: having an angular, but also a curved trajectory, with very rare figurative elements (zoomorphic and anthropomorphic ones), and also the same tectonic conception, connected to the form of the decorated surfaces.

In the chapter **JEWELRY**, we should mark their existence – at least for the ones that are for neck and chest (which constitute the topic of interest of the present material) – even before Metal Age. In Eneolithic (late Neolithic), there was a special preoccupation for the usage of copper – this fact was visible regarding forms (axes – chisels, and also for the initial form of the axe-hammer, with crossed arms and a transversal hole for the hilt) (Ursulescu, Petrescu-Dîmbovița & Monah, 2010, p. 146), and also for the casting technique (in simple patterns or bivalve), which also led to the increase of dimensions.

⁴⁸ 450 (for southern areas)/300 B.C. (for northern areas) – 106-271 A.D. Cf. H. D., in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p.155, s.v. *fierului, epoca*

⁴⁹ Named after the *oppidum* and worship place of the Celtic Helvetians near La Tène, on the shore of the Lake Neuchatel, Switzerland, in the classification of Iron Age from 1874, done by Hildebrand. Cf. A. Vulpe et al., *op. cit.*, p.289

Moreover, bronze objects are also used (the bronze was obtained through the old method of the alloy of copper and arsenium). At the beginning, tools were produced: axes, hatchets and other diverse pieces that came from isolated discoveries and from deposits and rarely from settlements and tombs; towards the end of Eneolithic, the production of copper objects decreased (in the cultures Cucuteni A-B, late Sălcuța, Cernavoda I). The first gold jewells appear (in the cultures Gumelnița, Cucuteni, Bodrogkeresztúr) (*Idem*, p. 147), this fact proves the evolution of metallurgy and reveals the beginning of the hierarchization of a society governed by elites.

Belonging to the culture Gumelnița, gold pendants have an apotropaic role and they could find their place among the anthropomorphic representations through the schematization of the idol type *en violon*: rings with trapeze-shaped extensions, another pendant having a disk shape, being concave-convex, the circular part does not have anymore the central hole. The décor is missing on these gold pieces or it is made *au repoussé* on one of the idols *en violon*. We also mention here the gold representations of animals. One of them, discovered in Gumelnița, is the oldest attempt of goldsmithery on the territory of Romania Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 268): a pendant with two twisted horns and decorated on the brim with rows of prominence *au repoussé*.

We cannot consider the few jewels of Cucuteni culture as emblematic for art: from Brad, there are two concave disks of gold board, with two holes for hanging, the big disk having a décor *au repoussé* with points on the brim (at the little one, there is a line of pearls, the margins are undulated) (Oanță-Marghitu, 2014, p. 186) (6,3 and 4,8 cm in diameter) (Wullschleger, 2008, p. 188, 221). There are disk-like pearls made of copper, discovered in Hăbășești (Dumitrescu, 1967, p. 35). We also add to these the gold piece from Traian – Dealul Fântânilor: there is a ring in the upper part, with a trapeze-like extension, decorated with a chain of knobs *au repoussé*, probably a ritualic multiplication of breasts (*Idem*, p. 168) (it is the schematization of the human form specific to idols *en violon*). The researchers believe that this pendant (or maybe applied object?⁵⁰) (of 2,6cm) (Dumitrescu, 1974, p. 266) was imported from Transylvania, where it probably belonged to the culture Bodrogkeresztúr and they place it in phase A-B. A piece found in Trușești, a similar one and decorated with small knobs *au repoussé*, was made of white metal (*en metal blanc*⁵¹): with a square head and a triangular body with rounded sides.

Though it has over 30cm high and it weighs over 750g, *The great pendant* made of a gold plaque from the thesaurus of Moigrad (belonging to the culture Gornești-Bodrogkeresztúr) has the same line with the idols *en violon*: a trapeze-shaped disk with a hole in the middle, with a punctured trapeze-shaped extension with 4 symmetrical holes. The décor consists in two rather big knobs (the breasts?) (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 88) above the central hole; the 4 punctures were used for fixing (an applied object?) (*Ibidem*). Furthermore, other

⁵⁰ A similar object was found, decorating an anthropomorphic pot from Gumelnița. *Idem*, p.170

⁵¹ Probably the oldest silver object discovered on the territory of Romania. Cf. Dan Monah, *Idoli en violon din cultura Cucuteni*, in *Cercetări istorice*, IX-X, 1978-1979, Iași, p.166

pieces (still applied) are of the type of *idols having their arms in cross*: of small dimensions (but bigger than the idols *en violon* made of metal of the other cultures: 8,5 – 9,7cm). They have a cross shape (*of bird?* of T?) (Wullschleger, 2008, p. 134), the ends (the lateral ones and the lower side one) have two scrolls twisted in opposite directions; two of them are decorated with two knobs *au repoussé*, surrounded by circles made of points (the breasts) (Dumitrescu, 1974, p. 269) and the head is indicated only by a breach of the upper contour (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 88) and two punctures (the eyes); the other has a high head, with a widened neck (*Ibidem*). Two conic gold shapes were found in the necropolis from Urziceni – *Vamă* (Satu Mare County); at the basis, the foil was twofold inside (it measures 2,1 and 1,9cm in diameter)⁵². Regarding these jewels – for neck and chest – we will continue our argumentative article which is specific for Metal Age.

THE NECKLACES made of bronze (as a sign of social distinction) appeared at the beginning of Bronze Age. The massive ones are not decorated. Some of them from Bocșa Română, Uioara, Ghergheș have a similar decor with the ones of the bracelets: wide and thin compartments, in which there is an alternation of multilinear zigzags with vertical lines, with the motif of the fir branch in the middle; well, the entire area is decorated with multilinear zigzags. Regarding form, many of them are twisted (a pendant of bracelets with ridges), *torques* made of gold or silver bar, known on our territory from Bronze Age Pârvan, 1982, p. 302). For example, we can mention the one from Alba Iulia – Partoș or the 3 *torques* – necklaces like bars – found in Deva, the ends are curved in order to be caught, or wrapped, as it is the case of the deposit from Bâlvănești (Basarabi culture) (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 124). The ones from the deposit from Coldău (the first Bronze Age) are made of bronze wire with a rounded section, with an uneven twisted bar (by one's hand) and spiral twisted ends or having semi-spherical protuberances or T-shaped ones (Rusu, 1967, p. 85-100).

From the thesaurus from Pecica – Rovine (Arad county), the necklace composed of 48 simple cones made of gold, punctured in order to be connected by a string (or to be applied on a vestment?). Probably it was a ritualic feminine jewelry (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 119) from the beginning of Hallstatt⁵³. Moreover, necklaces of gold beads having the form of spherical pearls, punctured in the middle were discovered, like the one from the thesaurus from Boarta (Sibiu County). Very often used, such gold pearls of different shapes (spheres, cylindrical, barrel-like, lamellated) were found in the thesauri from Sărăsău, Simeria, Șmig, in the necropolis from Lăpuș⁵⁴. Different chains have reached our times (such as the ones from Apoldu de Sus, Sibiu County, composed of 18 links made of a gold bar which was twisted), with the ends of different sizes (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 119), the links are thicker in the

⁵² CV, in Rodica Oanță-Marghitu, *op. cit.*, p.193

⁵³ H. D. și R. F., in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p.264, s.v. *Pecica*

⁵⁴ For more details regarding golden jewelry in Transylvania, see Mircea Rusu, *Considerații asupra metalurgiei aurului din Transilvania în Bronz D și Hallstatt A*, in *Acta musei napocensis*, IX, Cluj, 1972, p.29-63

median area, having a décor made of groups of notches⁵⁵. A saltaleone made from bronze tubes was found in Ferigele (Bârsești-Ferigile culture) (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, pp. 127-128). The golden pectoral from Balaci (Teleorman County) (belonging to early Hallstatt) is a simple halfmoon shaped band with eyelets on both ends in order to be caught from the vestment (*Idem*, p. 119).

Regarding PENDANTS, a pendant of 6cm with Celts miniatures comes from the deposit of bronze objects from Sângeorgiu de Pădure I (Mureș County). A rather rare object (4,5 cm length) is the pendant discovered in Oradea – Pepinieră, it has the shape of a small battle axe, made of bronze, created through casting (Ghemiș & Bulzan, 1998, p. 185). The bronze miniaturization of some daily objects is characteristic for the end of the Bronze Age. The pendants made of small hourglasses have concave long sides, convex or straight short sides, the upper part is rounded, the lower one is ornamented with ditches, thickened stemming. The pendants from Dridu have a décor with delicate incisions, the one from Ticvanu Mare has vertical lines in relief; furthermore, there are simple or double ribs as décor, marking the contour of the object, some of them even have relief rosettas (Arpășel), protuberances (Poșaga de Sus), a V-shaped motif (Ticvanu Mare)⁵⁶.

Having the form of eyeglasses, the pendants (just like fibulas...) were found in Ploiești – Triaj (the culture Bârsești-Ferigile), with the hanger made of the knot made of the two spirals, or the one from Sărata-Monteoru. Or the ones from Apuseni Mountains (Livezile, Poiana Aiudului, Ampoița, Mada – that belong to the cultural group Copăceni⁵⁷), and also the ones that belong to the *Culture Mureș*. Being executed very carefully, through beating, the pendants were in general worn at the neck, but sometimes they are also caught in a net or like ornaments of a head garniture. Two pendants with a slight anthropomorphic suggestion were discovered in Mișca (Arad County) (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 118). The syncretism between a human schematization and the image of an axe can be noticed on two bronze pendants found in Ulmi – Liteni (Iași County) – frequent forms for the pendants dating back to the late Bronze Age.

A special remark should be made here for the bronze chain with different pendants from Orșova (Hallstatt): there are links with very close bottoms, made of circular bronze wire and with symbolic pendants which represent pots with a leg, with a grooved shoulder, a high neck, a splayed lip with grooves, and also suggestively schematized pile driver, with very sharp pointed horns and with a décor carved on the body with angular lines and also an undefined shape. Moreover, we also mention here the ornamental chain of harness from Guruslău (Sălaj County) (a treasure in clear relation with the appearance of forms of social differentiation, reflected in costume details, weapons, harness (*Idem*, p. 105): a disk is connected with two small chains, the disk has five concentric

⁵⁵ ADP, in Rodica Oanță-Marghitu, *op. cit.*, p.233

⁵⁶ For more details, see Carol Kacso, *Pendantivele de bronz în formă de clepsidră*, in *Apulum*, XXVI, Alba Iulia, 1990, p.79-89

⁵⁷ For more details, see Cristian Ioan Popa, *Între podoabe, statut social și simbolică. Pendantivele-ochelari din Bronzul transilvănean*, in *Apulum*, XLVII, Alba-Iulia, 2010, p.1-22

circles in relief and an umbo in the middle, having three small chains attached to it through small crooks, the chains support a rectangular plaque decorated with two solar fretted wheels, closed by concentric circles and separated through a X-shaped décor in relief; other three small chains were caught on the same plaque, at their end there is a triangular plaque with a knurled inferior side and a décor on its body having V-shaped forms, oriented with their point above (Dumitrescu, 1974, p. 398).

Pendants were also used as harness, as the ones from Desa (Dolj county) (the Culture Basarabi), bronze ring fingers with a pierced tail for catching (Miclea & Florescu, 1980, p. 124) or like those five from the deposit from Ghidici (Dolj County) (also Hallstatt) (*Ibidem*). Tutuli, the bronze small bells that were hanging as a pendant of the harness (approximately 8cm long), produced sounds while touching each other; they were discovered in different deposits. As an example, we mention the ones from the cave from Cioclovina (Hunedoara County). In general, one of the versions has a disk-like concave body, a smooth surface, a conic button, while the other version has a conic shape, with concentric circles in relief and a sphere-like button. The background of the decorated ones was on the chime, with concentric circles. Finally, we mention here as small (2,9 cm) triangular pendant of golden layer found in the necropolis from Poiana (the Culture Monteoru), decorated *au repoussé* with a string surrounding the brim and a central motif similar to an upside down hook, with a vertical line in between.

3. Conclusions

It is undeniable the existence of local workshops that worked for the autochthonous tribal aristocracy (probably less Gethian, but surely Greek), hybrid works, belonging to orientalized art from the area of Thracia, Ukraine, Crimea, but, in general, the accent falls more on the itinerant masters who produced silent partner works, and less on the creation of a new type of art, specific to the Gets, despite stylistic features and multiple influences: an independent vision, a Getic autonomous style are not accepted by all researchers. At least for the period before the 2nd century B.C., some interpreters agree on an individual and original style of the Thracians from the median area, in which oriental elements, Scythian, Greek one relate and combine on a powerful autochthonous background, having as result images whose message is understood only by those that knew its symbolism.

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