

## Treasure of gold appliqués for horse harness from Primorsko

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### ABSTRACT

In 2016, rescue archeological excavations of a Thracian burial mound were conducted four kilometers to the north-west from the town of Primorsko in the locality “Silihlyar”.

Foundations of a rectangular feature were discovered in the eastern part of the mound. Its walls followed the cardinal directions and were preserved up to 0.55 m in height. During the excavations of this feature, 40 gold appliqués of a horse harness were found under the walls and the floor. They were spread over an area of cca. 2 m<sup>2</sup>. One of them was found in a mortar layer of the floor, while another seven were between the stones of the northern and eastern walls. The central element of the set represents a decorated shield to which an embossed eagle’s head was attached.

The clay lamp buried together with the gold appliqués suggests a deposition date of the set in a relatively narrow chronological range – 333-250 BC.

The Treasure of Primorsko is the first fully preserved set of gold decorations for horse harness found to the south of the Balkan Mountains. Further interdisciplinary research is forthcoming.

### KEYWORDS

Burial mound, Primorsko, gold appliqués, Hellenistic Thrace treasures

In the autumn of 2016, rescue archaeological excavations of a Thracian burial mound were held four kilometres to the north-west from the town of Primorsko in the locality “Silihlyar”. The tumulus is part of a necropolis consisting of altogether seven mounds located within three square kilometres. Two of them are almost completely destroyed by modern looting. The main burials in the remaining five tumuli, including the excavated one, were not affected.

The mound was located at the southern foot of a low hill called „Kanara“ on a clearly distinguished north-south slope. Its height to the south reached 6.42 m, and to the north – 3.68 m. The north-south diameter was 124 m and the east-west – 86 m.

The mound consisted of two types of soil. The western half contained an uniform, brown-colored soil, while the eastern part consisted of chernozem, mixed abundantly with different layers of lime and decomposed limestone concretions (fig. 1, 2).

In the course of the excavations it became clear that the ground surface in the central and eastern part of the mound was aligned with layers of clay mixed with small pebbles before the actual mound was formed. Thus, a site with horizontal surface and irregular shape was built with an approximate area of 350 m<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps at the time when the mound began to rise, heaps of fragments of ceramic vessels, mostly Greek amphorae, were piled on its periphery as documented to the south, west and east of the site. Their total number amounted to several hundred fragments in each of these areas. The informative units among them showed details of containers produced on the islands of Thasos, Chios, Rhodes, Peparet, as

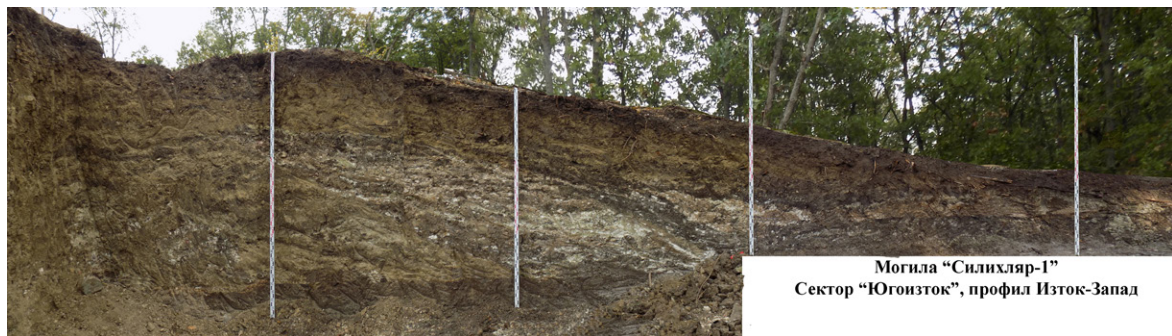


Fig. 1. Stratigraphy of the mound (author P. Balabanov)  
Обр.1. Стратиграфия на могиления насип (автор П. Балабанов)

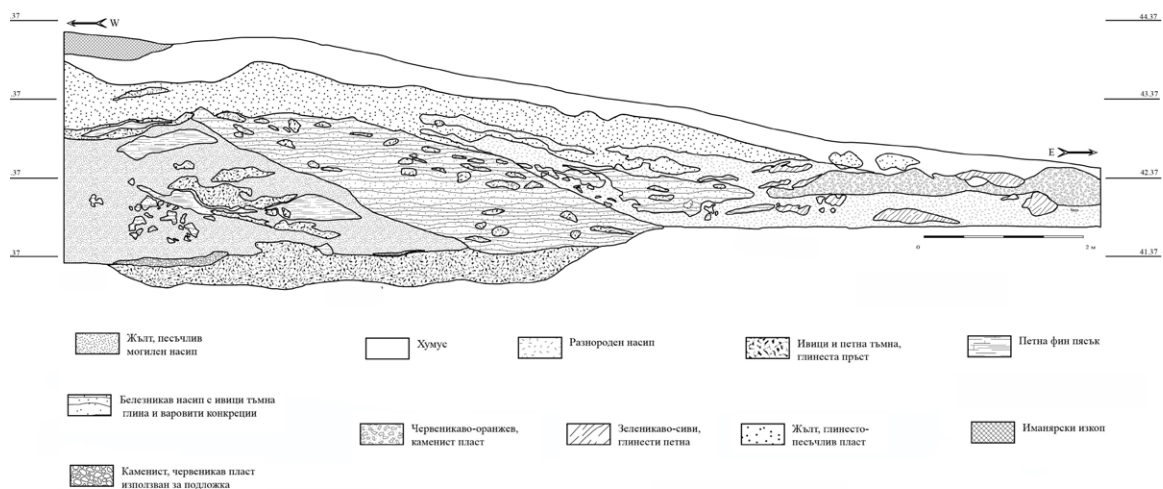


Fig. 2. Line drawing of the stratigraphy of the mound (author A. Jordanova)  
Обр. 2. Стратиграфия на могиления насип (автор А. Йорданова)

well as on the Knid Peninsula and in the towns of Mende and Sinope (fig. 3, 4) dated from the middle of 4<sup>th</sup> century BC to the middle of 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Separate fragments of such amphorae were found in all parts of the mound. There are also remains of local hand-made and potter's wheel craftsmanship though in minimal quantities. Only three tiny fragments belonged to small tableware covered with black slip.

A pavement of stone slabs was revealed to the north of the levelled site, which surface was covered with a thick layer of ash. It had an irregular, approximately oval shape covering an area of about 10 m<sup>2</sup>. Directly above and around the stones the soil of the mound was rich in concretions of lime and decomposed limestone.

Large quantities of natural and processed stones in no particular order were recorded in the southeast quarter of the mound. Some of them had a regular parallelepiped shape with approximate mean size of 0.23 x 0.35 x 0.18 m. A well-cast lime plaster, up to 10 mm in thickness, was preserved on a single surface on several of these stone blocks. A number of worked stones had different geometrical shapes, suggesting that they had been used in the building construction (fig. 5).

A large, dense, unformed pile of stones - the main part of which was roughly pro-

Fig. 3. Concentration of fragments from Greek amphorae found in the mound (author P. Balabanov)  
Обр. 3. Концентрация от фрагменти на гръцки амфори в насипа (автор П. Балабанов)



Fig. 4. Characteristic details of Greek amphorae (author P. Balabanov)  
Обр. 4. Характерни детайли от гръцки амфори (автор П. Балабанов)

cessed - emerged at depth between 0.8 and 1.8 m covering an area of over 150 m<sup>2</sup>. The pile was located on the eastern edge of the levelled site and immediately to the southeast of it. There, the depth of the stones was up to 1.5 m below the above mentioned clay layer mixed with small pebbles.

A pile of rough slabs and well-processed stones was found on the western edge of the tumulus just below the geometrical centre of the mound, probably from a room with rectangular or almost square plan that has collapsed long time ago. No wall foundations were documented but according to the volume of the pile it could be assumed that they were 2 x 2 m in length and over 1.50 m in height. It is possible that the roof structure was made of wood or constructed as a false vault as none of the stones was shaped as typical for domes or other standard roof structures (fig.6). There were also twenty whole and fragmented





*Fig. 5. Slabs from the construction of funerary features in sector 'Southeast' (author P. Balabanov)*

*Обр. 5. Обработени камъни от конструкцията на гробни съоръжения в сектор „Югоизток“ (автор П. Балабанов)*

stone blocks on which lime plaster was preserved on a single surface. An important detail is that these remains were located in the area of the mound, which was built exclusively from brown to grey forest soil.

At ground level to the east of this feature, an alley lined with a layer of relatively rough unprocessed stones oriented almost exactly in east-west direction was registered (fig. 7). It was severely destroyed, thus presumably its width was more than 1.5 m and its length more than 15 m. The stones lay directly on a levelling bed of clay. Among them numerous pieces of mortar with thickness up to 25 mm were found (more than 100), laid on a layer of fragments of ceramic vessels. They were alike findings from the eastern periphery of the mound. Fragments of human skull and hand were found on the alley, as well as animal bone fragments scattered over a large area.

Foundations of a rectangular feature were discovered under a large pile of slabs and un-worked stones in the eastern part of the mound. The walls were preserved up to 0.55 m in height and were oriented almost exactly according the four cardinal directions. The floor was paved with layer of ceramic fragments overlaid by mortar. The preserved parts of the northern, western and eastern walls, as well as parts of the floor had sunk to a depth of 0.45 m, very likely as a result of geological processes. The building was made of stone blocks which inner surface had preserved well-laid lime plaster. Clay solution was used as filler between and around the stones. On the outside the room was surrounded by piles of stone slabs up to 1.2 m in width that were meant to protect it from the pressure of the mound.

The southern wall was entirely demolished, while the eastern was only partially damaged. This had happened long time ago so their exact dimensions could not be document-





*Fig. 6. Remains of a stone structure under the centre of the mound (author D. Pantov)*

*Обр. 6. Останки от каменна конструкция под центъра на могилата (автор Д. Пантов)*

ed. The floor was of a well aligned layer of mortar laid on a bedding of broken fragments of ceramic pots – almost all of amphorae walls. The documented parts of the pavement to the south and to the east of the walls suggest that there were other buildings beside it.

Four clamps of U-shaped iron bars with pointed ends were found in the soil around the stones, as well as an iron hook probably used to fasten wooden elements of the structure. Such a hook was found in the south-eastern periphery of the mound, almost on its surface. Handle of a silver jug with cut-out decorations was found nearby when the surface was surveyed with metal detector, as well as a piece of appliqué and bronze nails probably used to decorate a wooden box.

These observations provide evidence to suggest that the feature was destroyed in antiquity, probably soon after the mound was erected. The grave goods deposited in this structure were looted at that time as well.

A fragment of a bone and a whole horse hoof were found in the process of removing the soil from the inside of the north-eastern corner, immediately above the floor level. They were trapped in a construction of iron rods, probably remains of shackles.

Forty gold appliqué from horse-harness decoration were found during the excavation of the foundations of stone feature underlying the walls and the floor. Thirty-two are small, semi-cylindrical in shape and decorated with protruding edges covered with a band of incisions. They were spread over an area of about 2 m<sup>2</sup>. One of them was found in a layer of mortar on the floor of the room, another seven were between the stones of the northern and the eastern wall. Four of the eight large appliqué have a round shape and are decorated with openwork, cut-outs, embossed or pseudo-filigree. Similar is the decoration

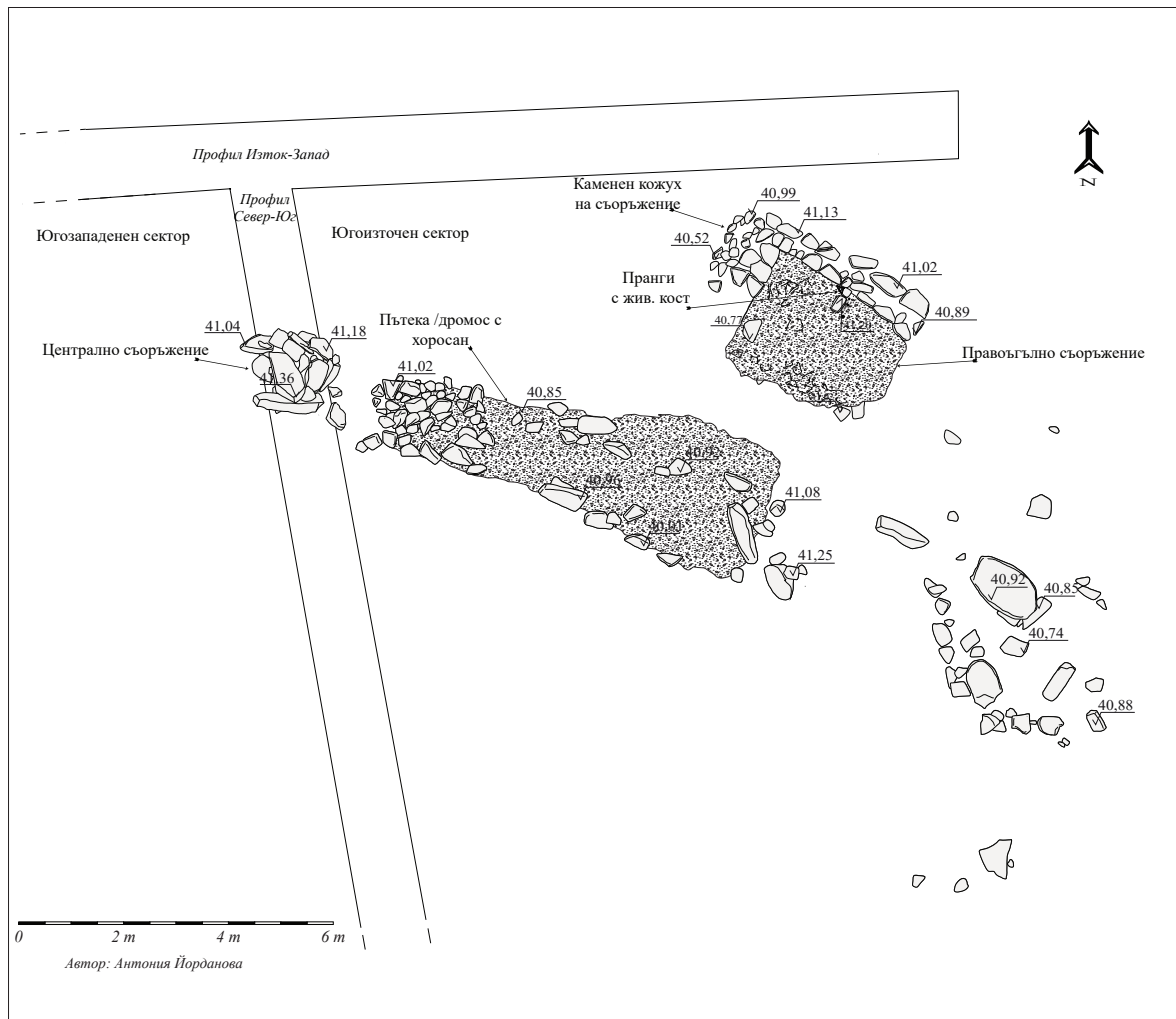


Fig. 7. Plan of building remains from the mound (author A. Jordanova)

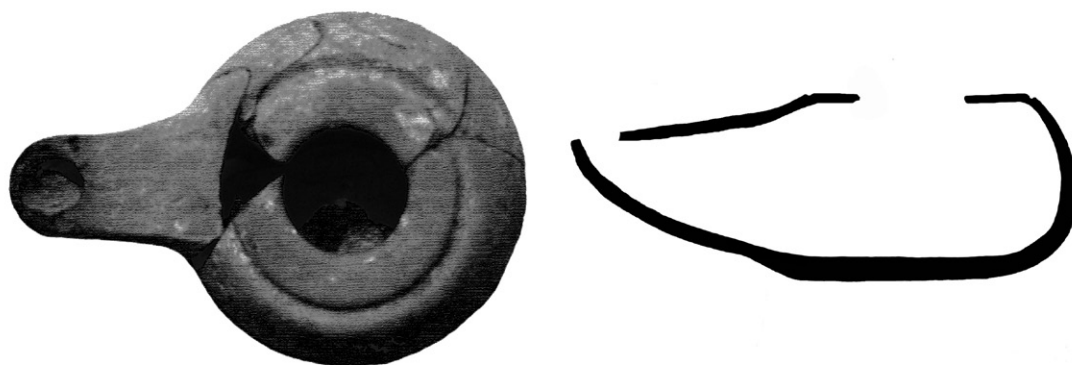
Обр. 7. План на останките от строителни конструкции в насипа на могилата  
(автор А. Йорданова)

of two appliqués with elongated shape. The central element of the set represents a shield covered with ornaments to which an embossed eagle's head was attached. Four of the elements – the central, the two elongated ones and one of the circular appliqués were found in close proximity to each other under the floor at the northeast corner. The other elements were found at the same depth within a radius of up to 1.5 m from the first group. A round appliqué decorated with embossed ornaments was also placed above the horse's nose. It was found at a greater distance (around 1.5 m to the south) from the others.

A whole clay lamp was found together with the gold objects under the north-eastern corner stone of the room. According to numerous analogies it may be dated to 320-280 BC (fig. 8)

These objects were obviously consciously hidden prior to commencement of the construction directly on the levelling clay layer. Their description is as follows:

1. Gold appliqué in the shape of two joined round shields. At the joining section there is a protomé – a head of an eagle. It is made by casting. A circular hole is left in the centre to which the hollow figure of the eagle is then attached. On the reverse side of the hole, there is a welded nut made of a wide golden plate for a horizontal strap. Another smaller nut made



*Fig. 8. Clay lamp found together with the gold appliqué (author P. Balabanov)*  
*Обр. 8. Глинена лампа, намерена заедно със златните апликации (автор П. Балабанов)*

in the same way for a vertically descending strap is welded to the centre of the opposite side of the smaller shield. The upper surface of the shields is decorated with two opposing stylized palmettes that were filled with thin embossing in the course of casting. The inside of the leaves is left empty and the areas between them is covered with numerous points dotted with a sharp tool after casting. A thin band of short incised lines on the edge of the shields resembles a filigree decoration. In some places, the dotted areas and pseudo-filigree are carelessly executed. Manufacture techniques: casting, forging, openwork and welding. Weight – 23.25 g (fig. 9).

The head of the eagle renders an emphasis on realism. The plumage is expressed with thin consequently incised lines. The eyes, eyebrows and the base of the bird's beak are formed in a similar manner.

2. A gold appliqué of round shape decorated with stylized embossed floral patterns (fig. 10a). Around a central figure of a stylized lotus flower, four others of the same size are symmetrically placed and the space between them is filled with interlaced lines. A secondary openwork effect had been added by cropping a part of the background. An embossed band decorated with incisions is placed along the periphery. The reverse surface is untreated. A massive nut with rectangular section for fastening to the strap is welded on its central area. Manufacture techniques: casting, forging, openwork and welding. Weight – 14.05 g.

3. Gold appliqué of round shape, identical to the one described above. Weight – 15.10 g (fig. 10b).

4. Gold appliqué of round shape, identical to the one described above. Weight – 15.45 g (fig. 10c).

5. Gold appliqué of round shape, identical to the one described above. Weight – 13.90 g. Specifics: deformation and crack of the central rosette (fig. 10d).

6. Gold appliqué with irregular elongated shape (fig. 11a). It is decorated with elaborate embossed figures: two stylized lotus flowers, two volutes and a small palmette; the space between them is filled with interlaced lines. Stylized leaves are placed between them. Embossed lines are decorated with short incised lines. The reverse side is untreated. A massive nut with rectangular section for fastening to a leather strap is welded to it. Manufacture techniques: casting, punching and embossing. Weight – 11.3 g

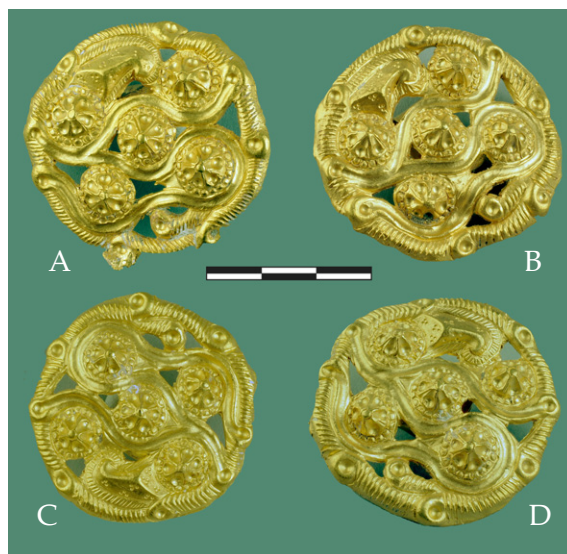
7. Gold appliqué, identical in shape to the one described above. Weight – 10.90 g (fig. 11b).

8. A gold appliqué with almost circular shape decorated with concaved and embossed ornaments (fig. 12). In the centre there is a stylized flower with eight petals surrounded by





*Fig. 9. The central element of the set  
(author G. Balabanov)*  
Обр. 9. Централният елемент на набора  
(автор Г. Балабанов)



*Fig. 10. Round appliques (author G. Balabanov)*  
Обр. 10. Кръгли апликации  
(автор Г. Балабанов)

a circle of embossed dots. Four stylized palmettes are placed symmetrically around them. The space between their leaves is filled with pointillé dots. Along the edge there is an embossed band covered with short incised lines. The reverse side is untreated. There is a nut welded to it with rectangular section designed for attachment to a strap. Weight – 8.7 g. Manufacture techniques: casting, forging and welding.

9. Small gold appliques (n=32) designed to decorate the bridle (fig. 13). They have a barrel-like body flanked by embossed edges and covered with short incised lines. They are made of a thin plate pressed into a mould. Based on slight difference in shape, at least four moulds can be identified. Thin nuts (all are deformed and their exact initial shape cannot be determined) are welded on their back side for fastening to a strap. Manufacture techniques: pressing, forging and welding. Weight: 8.89–11.10 g.

Characteristics: All have slight deformations from the affect of the mound.

10. A lamp of well-purified and well-fired clay with a light brown colour. A circular container with rounded walls and evenly cut base. It probably had a low pedestal that had been broken off for a long time. The nozzle is massive strongly protruding out of the container. The latter is decorated with two concentric incised circles. The filling hole is relatively wide (fig. 8).

The clay lamp deposited together with the gold appliques suggests that the burial took place in a relatively narrow chronological range. Analogy with the collection from the Athenian agora points to the production included in Type 24 C or Type 25 A (Howland, 1966, № 261, No 272) referring to the second half of the 4th century BC. Similar lamps from the British Museum's collection are dated in a slightly wider chronological range – from 333 to 250 BC (see links in the references).

Similar conclusions about the date of the elements of the treasure are suggested by the comparative analysis of its composition, as well as the analogies of its technological and artistic characteristics with other similar gold sets of elements of horse-harness found in





Fig. 11. Appliquéés with irregular shape (author G. Balabanov)  
Обр. 11. Апликации с неправилна форма (автор Г. Балабанов)



Fig. 12. Round appliquéé (author G. Balabanov)  
Обр. 12. Кръгла апликация  
(автор Г. Балабанов)

Bulgaria. Such analyses are significantly aided by the detailed overview publication of this type of artefacts by M. Tonkova (2010).

The central element of the treasure - the plate with embossed eagle's head, is undoubtedly comparable to that of a similar treasure discovered in a burial mound near the village of Kralevo, Targovishte (Ginev, 1983). It is dated approximately in the same chronological range: the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 3<sup>th</sup> century BC. As for the shape, style and ornamentation of the image, the available analogies do not contradict such a conclusion (Tonkova, 2010, fig.17). At the same time there are certain differences. The manufacture of the newly-found plate is a slightly more careless. The embossing of the ornaments is very shallow - they are simply hollowed out not surrounded by filigree stripes; there is no ornamental band around the base of the head; there are no traces of enamel; and the filigree is replaced by an irregular embossed edge covered with short incised lines. The empty fields around the details of the ornament are covered with numerous pointillé dots which in turn are missing in the element of Kralevo. This suggests that the master of the currently reported treasure knew the tradition of making this type of horse decorations in Thrace at the time of the diadochi and epigons of Alexander III the Great but did not possess the skills or was forced by the circumstances to depart from the precision of the Kralevo set.

Similar observations can be made in the comparison of the circular appliquéés from the treasures in Primorsko and Ivanski (Tonkova 2006). The latter was discovered in a well-preserved tomb and dated sufficiently precisely to 308–298 BC thanks to the amphorae deposited in the burial with stamps from the island of Thassos. There are also circular plates with embossed and openwork decorations as part of a horse-harness set (Tonkova 2010 Fig. 19). There, the embossing of the ornamental figures is significantly deeper, the figures



Fig. 13. *Small appliqués (author D. Pantov)*  
Обр. 13. *Дребни апликации (автор Д. Пантов)*



Fig. 14. *Small appliqués made with various stamps (author P. Balabanov)*  
Обр. 14. *Дребни апликации, направени с различни щемпели (автор П. Балабанов)*

and the openwork cut-outs are located symmetrically and the incised lines are deeper and evenly applied. The peripheral embossed edge is left without additional decoration. In contrast, the central image of a stylized lotus flower in the circular appliques from Primorsko is smaller in size and instead of six volutes around it there are four lotus flowers of the same size. They are separated by irregularly shaped incisions of different size and interlaced with irregular concaved and embossed lines. The edges of the circle are irregular, corresponding to the periphery of the elements of the ornamental patterns.

Most elaborate is the manufacture of the two elongated appliques from the treasure in Primorsko which were probably placed on both sides of the horse's mouth. In terms of shape they share some features with similar appliques from Kavarna (Mincev 1983) and Ivanski (Tonkova 2010, fig. 21). They are characterized by slightly different shape and different approach to the design and implementation of the decoration. A specific feature is the insertion of stylized leaves in the areas around the volutes, an element that is not found in the decoration of other sets of similar gold appliques.

Similarly, the round appliqué from Primorsko also differs in terms of details from other gold sets of horse-harness. Such circular elements are known from the composition of the lost treasure of Kavarna. Unfortunately, it is difficult to make secure claims about the degree of uniformity on the bases of photographs. Similar appliques have been found in the monumental tomb at Mezek (Tonkova 2010, fig. 26). However, they are decorated only with stylized embossed flowers superimposed on each other.

Most original as shape and manufacture in the treasure of Primorsko are the small appliques. Unlike what is known so far, their surface has been cleared of images, on the other hand their shape is clearly convex. They had been made by stamping a thin golden plate with the help of a matrix, technologically identical with the one found near the village of Dragoevo (Atanasov 2004). For more parallels see also Sveshtari, tumulus 12 (Gergova



*Fig. 15. Reconstruction of the harness as it was positioned on the horse's head  
(author P. Balabanov)*

*Обр. 15. Разположение на апликациите върху главата на коня – възстановка  
(автор П. Балабанов)*

2015). Another difference is that the small appliqué from Primorsko are made using at least four similar embossed shapes differentiated by minor details (fig. 14).

The manufacture of the currently reported elements of a treasure point to two main conclusions. It is obviously the work of a master who is acquainted with the technology, tradition and fashion of making such decorations in Thrace during the period from the end of the fourth to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The fewer number of elements, the relatively inferior details and the less careful manufacture of the individual decorative elements, as well as the lower weight of the individual appliqué compared to the so far known ones, suggest that he did not work in one of the well-known workshops. This allows to look for a production date either shortly before the 30s–20s of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC or, more likely, shortly after the proposed dates for the sets of Kralevo, Ivanski, Sboryanovo (Гинев 1983; Tonkova 2010), Kavarna (Mincev A. 1983) and the elements of horse decoration from Mezek (Tonkova 2010) - towards the end of the second quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.

It is relatively easy to restore the place of the individual elements on the leather harness on the horse's head (fig. 15). Obviously, the central element with an embossed eagle's head was placed in the centre of the forehead. It is noteworthy that among all these items, reviewed by M. Tonkova (2008), that have images of animals, only two have an eagle head - those from Primorsko and Ivanski. In addition to purely decorative features, this image may also suggest certain levels of power or dynastic attributes. The eagle has always been



used as a symbol of power in ancient religions. There are also images of an eagle on the coins of a number of Thracian rulers from the classical and Hellenistic epochs (Yurukova 1992), as well as on other objects of the same time associated with the prominent aristocrats (Agre 2011).

Round appliquéés probably have been placed on the crossing of the horizontal and vertical belts, and the oblong ones on both sides of the horse's mouth as the end of the bit rings. The place of the round appliqué is probably on the animal's nose and the small appliquéés have been attached to the bridle strap.

The nuts that had been attached to the straps have relatively narrow sections. This is especially obvious for the small appliquéés designed to decorate the bridle. This could be explained in two ways. Either the gold appliquéés were mounted on relatively thin strips sewn over the main strips or the harness with decorative elements was intended for use not in standard riding but in a parade walk of the animal within certain religious rituals.

The treasure from Primorsko is the first fully preserved set of gold decorations for horse-harness found to the south of the Balkan Mountains. An interdisciplinary study of this set is still forthcoming. However, it is clear that this remarkable finding, as well as the results of other recently explored sites in the region of Primorsko, indicate that during the Hellenistic period members of the Thracian aristocracy resided immediately to the south of the Greek polis Apollonia Pontica, who possessed significant power and economic resources (Hristov, Pantov 2016, Balabanov, Pantov 2015, unpublished results of the excavations of tombs in 2017). It is possible that they formed the economic base of the Thracian political and administrative structures, active on the Black sea coast to the south of Burgas bay that were established after the marches of Alexander of Macedon (Balabanov 1995).

The close analogy in the design and production technology of the well-known sets of gold appliquéés for horse head decorations, as well as the individual elements of such sets dated in a relatively short chronological period suggest that despite the political fragmentation in Ancient Thrace during the turbulent 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. and the invasion of Celtic tribes, there was a unified fashion trend, apparently related to the same rituals and religious practices.

The above mentioned considerations regarding the manufacture technique of the treasure from Primorsko allow us to assume that it was made in the area it was discovered. This raises the question of the possibility that a Thracian goldsmith workshop existed during the Hellenistic period, which products in terms of design and quality, are significantly different by the famous findings from the necropolises of the nearby Apollonia Pontica.

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## Съкровище от златни апликации за конска сбруя от Приморско

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(резюме)

През есента на 2016 г., на четири километра северозападно от град Приморско, бяха проведени разкопки на тракийска надгробна могила в м. „Силихляр“. Тя бе разположена в южното подножие на ниския хълм „Канара“, върху терен с ярко изразен наклон от север на юг. Височината ѝ от юг достигаше до 6,42 м, а от север – до 3,68 м. Диаметърът в посока север–юг бе 124 м, а в посока изток запад – 86 м (обр. 1 и 2).

Преди началото на насипване на могилата повърхността на терена е била подравнена с пластове от глина, примесена с малки камъчета. В периферията са били насипани купчини от фрагменти от керамични съдове, предимно от гръцки амфори. Информативните единици между тях позволиха да определим съдове, произведени на островите Тасос, Хиос, Родос, Пепарет, както и на полуостров Книд и в градовете Менде и Синопе и датирани между средата на IV и средата на III в. пр. Хр. (обр. 3 и 4).

Почти точно под геометричния център на могилата, се разкри купчина от грубо ломени и добре обработени камъни, вероятно от отдавна разрушено помещение с правоъгълен или квадратен план. Тук бяха намерени и двадесетина цели и фрагментирани квадри, по едната повърхност на които бе запазена варова мазилка (обр. 5 и 6).

В източната част на могилата, под голямо струпване от ломени и обработени камъни, на повърхността на подравнителния насип бяха разкрити основите на правоъгълно в план помещение. Стените му бяха ориентирани по посоките на света и бяха запазени на височина до 0,55 м. Подът му бе настлан от пласт керамични фрагменти, залети с хоросан. Отвън помещението бе оградено със струпване на ломени камъни с ширина до 1,2 м. Документираните участъци от настилка на юг и изток от трасето на стените на помещението подсказват, че до него е имало и други строителни конструкции (обр. 7).

В процеса на сваляне на насипа от вътрешната страна на североизточния ъгъл, непосредствено над подовото равнище, бе намерена част от костта и цяло копито на кон, заклещени с конструкция от железни пръчки, вероятно останки от букаи.

При проучването на основите на съоръжението, под стените и пода му бяха намерени 40 бр. златни апликации за украса на конска сбруя. Сред тях са 32 малки, с форма на полуцилиндър, украсен по основите си с изпъкнали ръбове, покрити с пояс от насечки. Те бяха пръснати върху площ от около 2 м<sup>2</sup>. Една от тях бе намерена в пласта хоросан от пода на помещението, а седем – между камъните на северната и източната стени. Заедно със златните предмети, под североизточния ъглов камък на помещението бе намерена цяла глинена лампа, според многобройни аналогии може да бъде датирана към 320–280 г. пр. Хр.

1. Златна апликация с форма на два съединени кръгли щита. В участъка на съединяването е поставена протоме – глава на орел. Изработена е чрез отливане. В центъра е оставен кръгъл отвор, върху който впоследствие е прикрепена кухата фигура на орела. На опаковата страна върху отвора е заварена гайка, направена от широка златна пластинка, за хоризонтален ремък. Друга, по-малка гайка, направена по съ-



щия начин за вертикално спускащ се ремък е заварена в центъра на обратната страна на по-малкия щит. Горната повърхност на щитовете е украсена с две срещуположни стилизирани палмети, изпълнени с нисък релеф, в хода на отливането. Вътрешността на листата им е оставена празна, а полетата между тях – покрити с многобройни точки, нанесени с остър връх след отливането. По периферията на щитовете минава тънък пояс от къси сечени линийки, наподобяващ филигранна украса. На места поясите от точки и от псевдофилигран са изпълнени небрежно. Техника на изработване: отливане, изчукване, ажур и заваряване. Тегло – 23,25 гр. (обр. 9).

Главата на орела е представена с подчертан стремеж към реализъм. Оперението е предадено с тънки, вторично врязани линии. По същия начин са оформени очите, веждите и основата на клюна на птицата.

2. Златна апликация с кръгла форма, украсена със стилизирани релефни флорални мотиви. Около централна фигура на стилизиран цвят на лотос са разположени симетрично четири други със същия размер, а пространството между тях е запълнено с преплетени линии. Добавен е и вторичен ажурен ефект чрез изрязване на част от фона. По периферията минава релефна лента, украсена с насечки. Повърхността на обратната страна е необработена. Върху нея в централния участък е заварена масивна гайка с правоъгълно сечение за прикрепване към ремъка. Техники на изработка: отливане, изчукване, ажур и заваряване. Тегло – 14,05 гр. (обр. 10a).

3. Златна апликация с кръгла форма, идентична на горната. Тегло – 15,10 гр. (обр. 10b).

4. Златна апликация с кръгла форма, идентична на горната. Тегло – 15,45 гр. (обр. 10c).

5. Златна апликация с кръгла форма, идентична на горната. Тегло – 13,90 гр. Особености: деформация и пукнатина на централната розета (обр. 10d).

6. Златна апликация с неправилна продълговата форма. Украсена е със сложни релефни фигури: два стилизирани лotosови цвята, две волути и малка палмета, пространството между които е запълнено с преплетени линии. Между тях са поставени стилизирани листа. Релефните линии са украсени с къси врязани чертички. Обратната страна е необработена. Към нея е заварена масивна гайка с правоъгълно сечение за прикрепване към кожен ремък. Техники на изработка: отливане, изчукване и релеф. Тегло – 11,3 гр. (обр. 11a).

7. Златна апликация, идентична по форма с горната. Тегло – 10,90 гр. (обр. 11b).

8. Златна апликация с форма на почти правилен кръг, украсена с вдлъбнати и релефни орнаменти. В центъра е изобразен стилизиран цвят с осем листчета, ограндени с кръг от релефни точки. Около тях симетрично са разположени четири стилизирани палмети. Пространството между листата им е запълнено с набодени точки. По периферията минава релефен пояс, покрит с къси насечени линийки. Обратната страна е необработена. Към нея е заварена гайка с правоъгълно сечение, предназначена за прикрепване към ремък. Тегло – 8,7 гр. Техники на изработка: отливане, изчукване и заваряване (обр. 12).

9. Малки златни апликации (32 екземпляра), предназначени за украса на юздата. Имат бъчвообразно тяло, фланкирано от релефни ръбове, покрити с къси врязани чертички. Направени са от тънка пластинка, пресована в калъп. Според незначителни разлики във формата могат да се определят най-малко четири калъпа. От обратната им страна са заварени тънки гайки (всички са деформирани и точната им първоначална форма не може да бъде определена) за прикрепване към ремък. Техники на из-

работка: пресоване, изчукване и заваряване. Тегло: 8,89–11,10 гр. (обр. 13). Особености: Всички имат леки деформации от престоя в насипа.

10. Лампа от добре пречистена и изпечена глина, придобила светлокафяв цвят. Има кръгъл резервоар със заоблени стени и равно отрязано дъно. Вероятно е имала ниско столче, отчупено отдавна. Фитилникът е масивен, силно издаден извън резервоара. Плочката на последния е украсена с две концентрични врязани окръжности. Отворът за наливане на масло е сравнително широк (обр. 8).

Централният елемент на съкровището – плочката с релефна глава на орел има несъмнено сходство с този от подобното съкровище, открито при проучване на надгробна могила край с. Кралево, Търговишко. То е датирано приблизително в същите хронологически граници: края на IV – началото на III в пр. Хр.

Подобни наблюдения могат да се направят и при сравнението на кръглите апликации от съкровищата в Приморско и с. Ивански. Последното е открито в гробница и се датира в рамките на 308-298 г. пр. Хр., благодарение на поставените сред погребалния инвентар амфори с печати от остров Тасос.

Сравнително лесно е възстановяването на мястото на отделните елементи върху кожената сбруя по главата на коня. Очевидно централният елемент с релефна глава на орел е бил поставен в центъра на челото. Кръглите апликации вероятно са били поставени върху кръстосването на хоризонталните и вертикалните ремъци, а продълговатите - от двете страни на устата на коня като завършек на псалиите. Мястото на кръглата апликация е вероятно върху носа на животното, а малките апликации са били прикрепени към ремъка на юздата (обр. 15).

Съкровището от Приморско е първият изцяло запазен комплект на амуниция от златни апликации за украса на кон, намерен на юг от Балкана. То тепърва ще бъде обект на интердисциплинарни изследвания.

Изтъкнатите съображения за техниката на изработка на съкровището от Приморско позволяват да приемем, че то е създадено в района, в който е открито. Това поставя въпросът за възможността през елинистическата епоха тук да е съществувало тракийско златарско ателие, изделията на което като дизайн и качество се отличават чувствително от известните находки в некрополите на разположената в непосредствена близост Аполония Понтика.